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1666: THE FIRE OF LONDON CONSPIRACY

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THE NEWS
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Britain said
yes to
Europe

Viking Invasion

How Norse warriors
conquered the
Anglo-Saxons

The Suez crisis
and the death of
the British empire



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uncovered**

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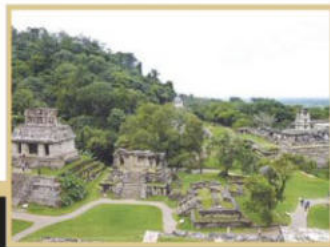
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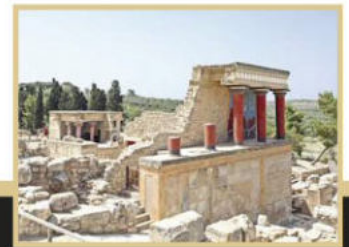
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WELCOME

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“In 865 the ‘**Viking Great Army**’ arrived in the British Isles and began a lengthy campaign to conquer the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Our knowledge of this invading force is still incomplete, but thanks to some recent archaeological research, several new insights are now emerging. On page 36 Julian D Richards and Dawn Hadley reveal some of the latest findings about this dramatic period of English history.

One of the major milestones being marked this year is the 350th anniversary of the **Great Fire of London**. The 1666 blaze caused tremendous destruction to the city and saw a new metropolis eventually rise from the ashes. As the inferno took hold, Londoners began to wonder what had caused this tragedy to overtake their city. Was it divine retribution or something rather more sinister? On page 22 Alexander Larman explores the various conspiracy theories that sprang up in the wake of the disaster.

Meanwhile, back in 2016, the ramifications of **Britain's vote to leave the EU** are still playing out, and our postbag has been bursting with your thoughts about this historic event. This month, we continue to provide context to the referendum with an article by historian Robert Tombs that explores **Britain's original decision to join the EEC**. Head to page 51 for that and please keep sending us your views about history in the making.

Rob Attar

Editor

BSME Editor of the Year 2015, Special Interest Brand



THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



Alexander Larman

There are an endless number of myths around the Great Fire of London. It still fascinates and appalls us, 350 years after the event, and I wanted to find out what really happened.

● **Alexander charts the fallout from the Great Fire of London on page 22**



Alex von Tunzelmann

The twin crises of 1956 represented the point of most danger between the Second World War and the Cuban missile crisis. People were seriously scared about what the result of it all was going to be.

● **Alex discusses her new book on 1956 on page 65**



Robert Gerwarth

The assassination of Reinhard Heydrich was the most spectacular secret service mission of the Second World War. Yet the terrible consequences for those living in Bohemia and Moravia help to explain why nobody involved officially claimed responsibility for it.

● **Robert describes the plot to kill Heydrich on page 46**

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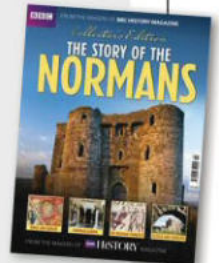
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Editorial historymagazine@historyextra.com

POST Subscriptions & back issues

BBC History Magazine, PO Box 279, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8DF

Basic annual subscription rates:

UK: £40, Eire/Europe: £64.60, ROW: £66.60

Editorial *BBC History Magazine*, Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN



In the US/Canada you can contact us at: PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037



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He is best known for slaughtering Frenchmen. Yet, as Malcolm Vale writes, the hero of Agincourt had a softer side

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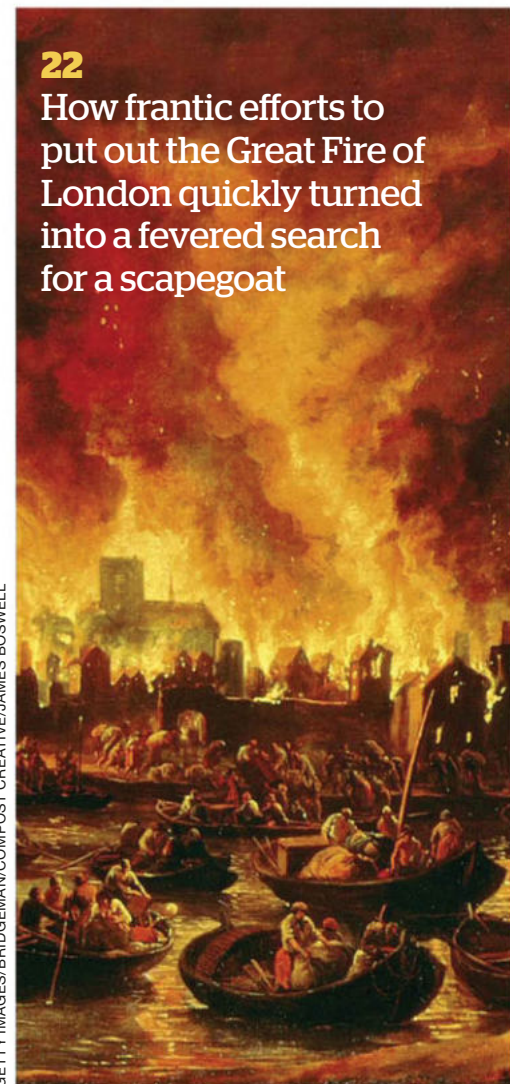
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The daring plot to kill Reinhard Heydrich

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How frantic efforts to put out the Great Fire of London quickly turned into a fevered search for a scapegoat

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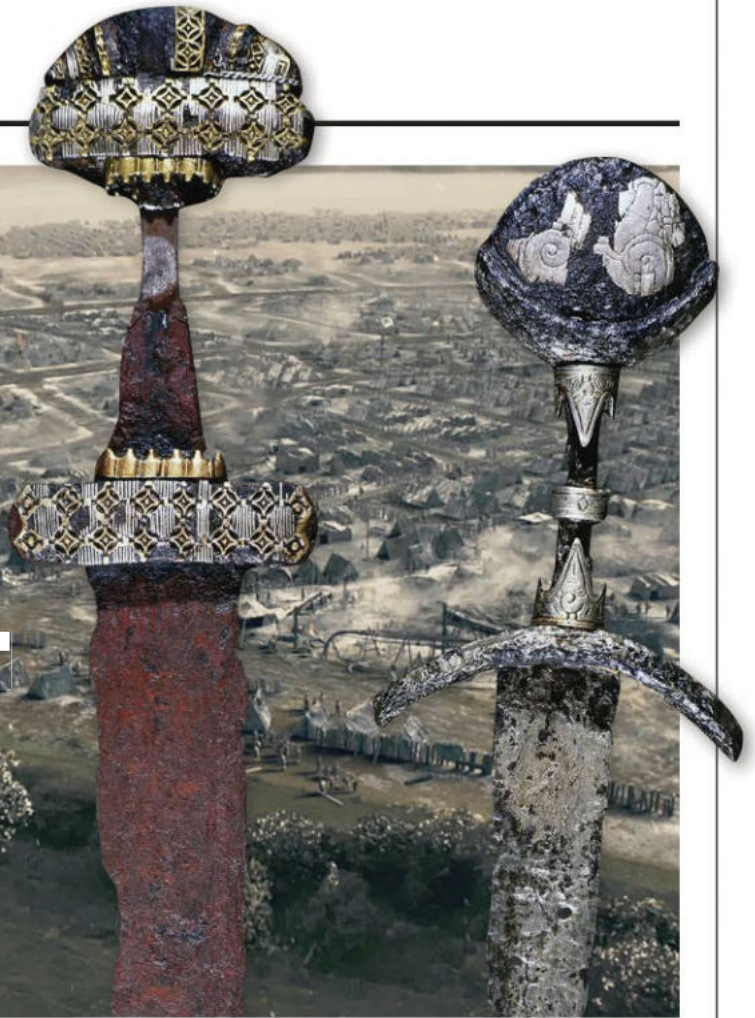


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VIKING LOOTERS
EVOLVED INTO
A MASSIVE
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so much more than
a military hero

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ANNIVERSARIES

18 September AD 96

Domitian is stabbed

Disaffected aristocrats conspire to have the Roman emperor assassinated

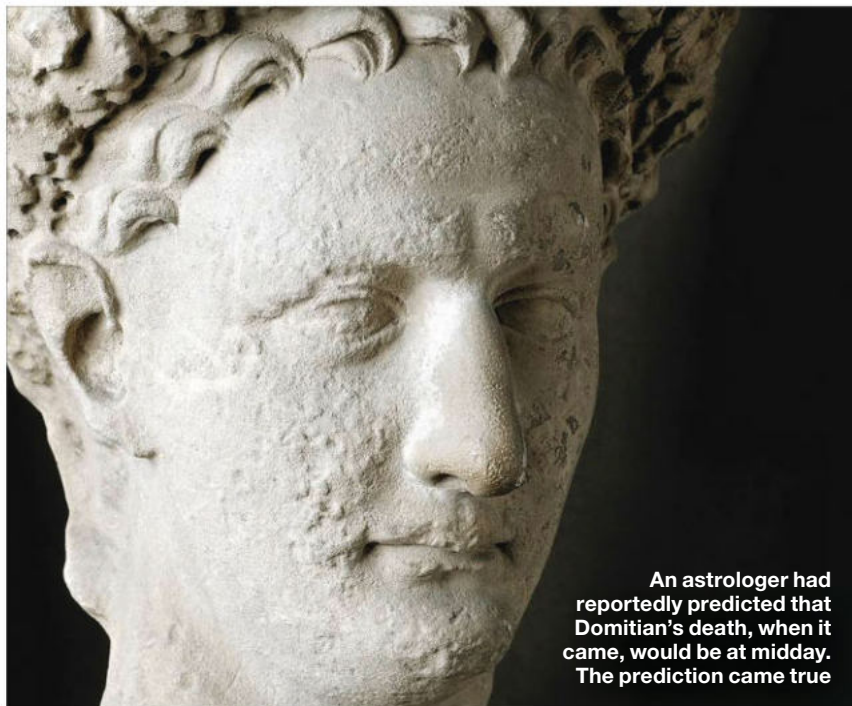
By September 96, the emperor Domitian had ruled Rome for 15 years, longer than anyone since Tiberius. He had established a reputation as a supremely competent administrator, who concentrated power in his own hands and maintained his popularity through building works, bread and circuses.

Among one group, however, Emperor Domitian's name was mud. For the traditional aristocracy, his contempt for the Senate was simply too much to bear. And, as the 15th anniversary of his accession approached, a group of disaffected patricians decided that it was time to act.

At midday on 18 September, the emperor seemed in a restless mood. According to the historian Suetonius, an astrologer had warned him that he would die around midday, so he was never at his

best during lunchtime. At one point, Domitian distractedly asked a servant boy what time it was. Well after noon, the boy said. Relieved, the emperor sat down to work, poring over his state papers. At that moment, he was approached by a servant, one Stephanus.

For some days, Stephanus had been wearing bandages, supposedly after an accident. In fact, the bandages were concealing a dagger, which he now produced behind his back. He handed the emperor another document, and as Domitian began to read, Stephanus stabbed him violently in the groin. More servants clustered around; more blows fell. In the confusion, Stephanus himself was mortally wounded. But by now, Domitian's robes were scarlet with blood. A few moments later, the last of the Flavian emperors was dead.



An astrologer had reportedly predicted that Domitian's death, when it came, would be at midday. The prediction came true

27 September 1825

World's first steam railway opens

Thousands cheer successful first journey of Locomotion No 1

When they awoke on 27 September 1825, investors in the new Stockton and Darlington Railway could have been forgiven for feeling nervous. Four years after parliament had voted to permit a railway line from the inland collieries of County Durham, the shareholders, most of them Quakers, had spent more money than planned. With their company £60,000 in the red, everything depended on a successful start.

Not long after dawn, workers began attaching the first coal wagons to the groundbreaking locomotive, which rejoiced in the name 'Locomotion No 1'. It had been built by Robert Stephenson and Company, a local firm set up just two years earlier, specifically to construct steam trains. Since this was the first time a locomotive had been used in a public railway, interest was intense. With the local papers having heavily advertised the launch, hundreds of people crowded around the wagons at Shildon Lane End. By the time the train left, some observers thought it was carrying as many as 600 people, most packed into seats inside a string of coal wagons, but some perched precariously on top of great piles of coal.

By modern standards the speed – around 12 miles an hour – was extremely slow, but a horseman carrying a flag rode in front to warn passers-by, while many well-wishers, who had hoped to follow the route on horseback, fell behind in exhaustion. At least twice, the train stopped for minor repairs. But at last, after a journey of about two hours, the locomotive pulled in to Darlington, to great cheers from thousands of spectators.

The great experiment had been a success. That night, flushed with triumph, the investors held a banquet at Stockton Town Hall to toast the brave new world of the railway.

GETTY IMAGES

Dominic Sandbrook is a historian and presenter. His new series about Britain in the 1980s is now airing on BBC Two



The first public outing for a steam locomotive generated huge excitement in County Durham in 1825, attracting thousands of well-wishers. The carnivalesque atmosphere is depicted in a later colour lithograph

7 September 1764

Stanisław August Poniatowski, former lover of Catherine the Great, is elected as **last king and Grand Duke of the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania**.



12 September 1846

After a secret courtship, the poets **Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett** elope and are married at St Marylebone Parish Church, London.



1 September 1902

Parisian cinema goers have their first glimpse of the **world's earliest science-fiction film**, George Méliès's *Le Voyage Dans La Lune*.



Riggs and King in 1973. The former male world No 1 was hammered by a female champion – of both tennis and women's rights

20 September 1973

Billie Jean is King in tennis's 'Battle of the Sexes'

Female tennis champ defeats a self-proclaimed male chauvinist pig

Competitive sport had never seen anything like it. To great roars from more than 30,000 spectators, and with an estimated 90 million people watching on television, the 29-year-old Billie Jean King was carried by four muscle-bound men into the Houston Astrodome, like Cleopatra on her throne. A few moments later, the 55-year-old Bobby Riggs followed, in a rickshaw drawn by a group of nubile young women. Riggs handed

her a lollipop. King gave him a piglet, a fitting gift for a man who prided himself on being a chauvinist pig. And then the slaughter began.

Although it was merely an exhibition, the Battle of the Sexes, which took place on 20 September 1973, was the most watched tennis match of all time. Since hanging up his racquet in 1951, Riggs, the former world No 1, had relentlessly courted publicity, winning lurid

headlines with his scathing criticism of the women's game. Women, he said contemptuously, were no good at tennis; even in his fifties, he could beat any of the top female players. King's rival Margaret Court promptly accepted the challenge; unfortunately, Riggs beat her, 6-2, 6-1.

As one of America's best-known champions of women's rights, Billie Jean King picked up the gauntlet. "I thought it would set us back 50 years if I didn't win that match," she said later. "It would ruin the women's tour and affect all women's self-esteem." And she was as good as her word. That day in the Astrodome, she hammered Riggs 6-4, 6-3, 6-3. "For women everywhere," said *The New York Times*, "she convinced sceptics that a female athlete can survive pressure-filled situations and that men are as susceptible to nerves as women."

9 September 1739

Slaves make a bid for freedom

The Stono Rebellion is the biggest revolt of its kind in British North America

Early in the morning of 9 September 1739, almost two dozen men gathered in the fields near the Stono river, some 20 miles south-west of Charleston, South Carolina. All of them were slaves. Their self-appointed leader was known as Jemmy; contemporaries called him 'Angolan', but he had probably been shipped west from the kingdom of Kongo, in central Africa. It was Jemmy who had roused his fellows by appealing to their thirst for freedom; it was probably also Jemmy who gave them their motto, 'Liberty!'

At first, Jemmy and his fellows made good progress. Their first move was to raid Hutchenson's Stores at the nearby Stono River Bridge, where they killed two men and stole a large consignment of guns and ammunition. Heading south, they paused to burn the white



Slave uprisings continued in the southern colonies (later, states) in the years after the Stono Rebellion. This is a contemporary description of Nat Turner's revolt in Virginia in 1831

residents' houses as they passed, killing somewhere between 20 and 30 people. Tellingly, they spared the man who kept Wallace's Tavern, because he was known to be relatively kind to his own slaves.

By midday, the fugitives' numbers had swollen to between 50 and 100. Whenever they encountered whites, they generally killed them. One who got away, though, was the state's lieutenant governor, William Bull, who rode off to raise the local militia. The next day, Bull's men caught up with the slaves

near the Edisto river. There, he reported to London, his men "killed and took so many as to put a stop to any further mischief at that time, 44 of them have been killed and executed". The rest, he wrote, "remain concealed in the woods expecting the same fate".

None of the fugitives made it all the way to Spanish Florida and freedom. Within a couple of weeks, all had been either killed or captured. So ended one of the greatest slave rebellions in the history of British America. ■

COMMENT / Heather A Williams

"After the Stono Rebellion, slavery became even more oppressive"

“Through reading, eavesdropping, or word of mouth, Jemmy and the leaders of the Stono Rebellion had learned that Spain promised freedom to slaves who escaped to Florida. Their insurrection threatened the increasing wealth of white planters, so in 1740, just months after the rebellion, South Carolina enacted legislation regulating nearly every aspect of enslaved people's lives.

The slave code declared that children born to enslaved mothers would be absolute slaves for life. It restricted movement and deputised all whites to capture and punish any enslaved person found away

from the owner's premises without written permission. It prescribed capital punishment for a range of crimes including burning crops or other commodities, attempting an insurrection, or enticing other slaves to run away from the colony. The law made it illegal to teach any enslaved person to write, and a sumptuary provision even relegated slaves to wearing only clothing made from the coarsest material.

South Carolina continued to thrive as a colony and, at the 1787 Constitutional Convention, its delegates fought hard to ensure that the nation's founding document did not interfere with the right to hold people

in slavery. Planters relied on the unpaid labour of African Americans to produce rice and cotton, so the colony threatened to leave the Union before it had even been formed. Their efforts succeeded, and slavery continued for another eight decades.”




Heather A Williams is professor of Africana Studies, University of Pennsylvania and author of *American Slavery: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2014)

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HISTORY NOW

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Rough seas

A British merchant ship in the 19th century. By the 1880s, aristocratic elitism and a reluctance to modernise were crippling British shipping companies

Revealed: Why the British empire sailed into trouble

A new study details how British sea power went into sharp decline at the end of Victoria's reign - with serious consequences for the nation.
By **Ellie Cawthorne**

Where would the British empire have been without its cups of tea? Or, for that matter, the drugs in its hospitals or the postal system carrying its news around the world? In transporting materials to feed, clothe and fuel people across the globe, Britain's shipping industry stood at the heart of the nation's imperial project.

Colossal profits were up for grabs and fortunes could be made by savvy sea merchants. By the 1880s, futures looked

even brighter, as foreign trade with China was rising, opening up even more avenues for growth. Yet despite the high expectations of investors, less than a decade later the good times were already gone: British shipping companies were on the wane.

This slowdown is the subject of a new study undertaken by Cambridge researcher Gregor McMillan, soon to appear in the *International Journal of Maritime History*. The study, which delves into shipping companies' annual reports and directors'



Revolutionising the waves The opening of the London to Paris telegraph link in 1851. Major British shipping companies “struggled to perceive how innovations such as this would alter the way things operated”, says Gregor McMillan

correspondence, has found them to be dominated by a damaging ‘aristocratic’ culture during the late Victorian period. Crippled by their own elitism and inability to modernise, British firms found themselves outstripped by more streamlined international competitors.

We think of the Victorian age as a time of great technological advancement, and shipping was no exception. Innovations such as the telegraph, steamship and Suez Canal revolutionised the waves, but McMillan’s research suggests major British firms were slow to get on board.

It’s not that the companies rejected modernisation altogether – more that adaptation was haphazard and hesitant. “They struggled to perceive how these innovations would alter the way things operated,” says McMillan. He found that some firms simply attempted to use new technologies according to tried and trusted methods: a move that proved both inappropriate and inefficient.

Staff at one major firm, for instance, reportedly didn’t trust telegrams, following each message up with a letter of explanation that could take days or even weeks to arrive. “It’s a bit like

One major firm didn’t trust telegrams, following up each message with a letter that could take weeks to arrive

having a calculator, then waiting to check your answer on a slide rule,” says McMillan.

Another factor that contributed to British shipping companies’ decline, argues McMillan, was the narrow, nepotistic networks within which they operated. Information was retained by only a handful of high-level players, who, rather than negotiating deals with competitors, fruitlessly tried to monopolise a huge global industry that had outgrown them.

Dr Sean Lang, senior lecturer in history at Anglia Ruskin University, suggests that McMillan’s research is notable because the outdated practices he identifies reflect a wider trend. “The decline in British merchant shipping and its difficulties in adapting to the modern world mirror a general sense of malaise about Britain and its empire that afflicted the Victorians at the end of the 19th century,” he says. “The empire’s often timid approach to modernisation – also seen in fierce resistance to attempted naval reform during the same period – was a significant weakness in the years before the First World War.”

The study also has important implications for global trade in the 21st century, McMillan argues. “In a historical context, it’s part of a much bigger story. China’s current domination of shipping would not have been possible if western firms had not lost control in this way at the end of the 19th century. This research shows why that happened, and how we moved towards where we are now.”

WHAT WE’VE LEARNED THIS MONTH

Tombs may have aided prehistoric stargazers

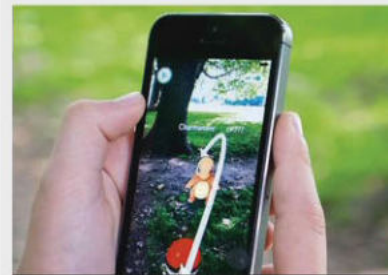
The entrance passages of ancient tombs in Portugal may have been deliberately aligned to improve the view of the night sky, archaeologists have suggested. The 6,000-year-old structures in Carregal do Sal, in the north of the country, appear to have been orientated to provide a good view of Aldebaran, a bright red star in the Taurus constellation. The star’s reappearance in the sky may have been a key marker in the area’s ritual and agricultural calendar.

Van Gogh may have cut off his entire ear

Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh may have severed his whole ear rather than just part of it, newly found records suggest. The sketches, made by a physician who treated van Gogh following the incident in 1888, were found by an author and amateur historian in a California archive. They also appear to show that ‘Rachel’ – the woman who the artist handed the organ to – worked as a cleaner and a maid in brothels, rather than as a prostitute, as previously thought.

Museum visitors have been asked to quit game

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum and Arlington National Cemetery have both asked people not to play a new smartphone game during their visits. Pokémon Go, which has proved hugely popular since its launch in July, allows users to find and collect virtual creatures in real locations, including landmarks. Officials at the Holocaust museum are attempting to have the site removed from the game.



Pokémon Go’s virtual beast-hunting has led to concern at sensitive sites

GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY

ANGLO-SAXONS

Historians are to follow in the footsteps of King Harold

Why are a band of experts recreating the king's 1066 dash to Hastings?

Matt Elton finds out...

It may be almost a millennium ago, but 1066 is a date that continues to have a significant pull in the British popular imagination. And now, to mark its 950th anniversary, a team of volunteers is aiming to recreate one of the year's key episodes: King Harold's epic march to meet William the Conqueror in battle at Hastings.

Harold had spent 25 September 1066 defeating an invasion force led by the Norwegian king Harald Hardrada in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Yet no sooner had the Anglo-Saxon ruler sheathed his sword than news reached him that William, Duke of Normandy had landed in Sussex with a massive invasion army all of his own. Harold's men had little choice but to rush south to confront the Normans in battle. What followed was a remarkable march that ultimately ended with a decisive defeat at Hastings on 14 October.

Although the team from English Heritage will be recreating the march between those two dates – and travelling both on foot and horseback as the troops would have done – there have inevitably been some changes to the surrounding landscape in the intervening centuries. “Unfortunately, the roads on which Harold travelled are all but gone,” says Nigel Amos, one of the project members. “We can only guess at much of his route, but there are points at which we can be sure that we are walking very close to his footsteps, particularly when we are on stretches of the Ermine Street, the old Roman road that ran from London to Lincoln.”

The re-enactment, which will cover more



To battle Harold heads to Hastings in a section of the Bayeux tapestry. Volunteers will embark on a re-creation of the king's journey in September

than 300 miles, is split into three legs, with the team stopping at locations such as Selby, Tonbridge Castle and Westminster Abbey. “We will probably end up travelling 50 miles more than Harold needed to, as we wind around B-roads,” says Amos. “Harold was understandably in rather more of a rush, covering huge distances every day.”

So why risk what Amos characterises as “the resilience of our feet and backsides”? The team hopes that the project will recast the expedition as not merely a descent into disaster, but a noble and heroic failure. “Celebrating the 950th anniversary is an opportunity to pay tribute to the undoubted courage of Harold and his men on that march, but also to explore the wider story

“There are points when we are sure to be walking very close to Harold's footsteps”

of the Norman conquest – which has its foundations in nearly three centuries of Viking incursions,” Amos says. “It's intriguing to attempt any challenge that might give us insight into those days. I've already found, researching the route, that there are so many fascinating stories from the Norman conquest that don't make their way into typical histories of the period.”

Marc Morris, author of several books on the Norman conquest, said: “The value of this project is that it will raise awareness of the events of 1066, which is the single most important date in English history – after all, the Conquest altered England more than any other event.”

“Harold reacted quickly to the news that William invaded and went straight to meet him in battle. Compare his actions to King John, for instance, who 800 years ago this year responded to a French invasion of England by taking one look at the invading forces and running away.”

For more on the march, including details of the route, go to english-heritage.org.uk

The historians' view...

Have Turkey and the west always been uneasy neighbours?

As members of Nato and the EU voice their concern at President Erdoğan's reaction to July's failed military coup, two experts offer their takes on the west's relationship with a nation that it has often characterised as 'the Other'

Interviews by **Chris Bowlby**, a BBC journalist specialising in history

“Nationalists argued that secularisation was not anathema to Turkish culture – that Turks were already more ‘western’ than the west

DR REBECCA BRYANT

Turkey's modernisation path has always been marked by the paradox of wanting to prove itself to the west and at the same time wanting to prove that it does not have to prove itself. This was as true of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the country's founding leader, as it is of the current government in Turkey, even if they had different ideas about what that implies.

For several hundred years the Ottoman empire was western Europe's most immediate competitor, threat and cultural Other. By the end of the 19th century, European powers had colonised former Ottoman territories in north Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, and the Ottomans were in a stranglehold of debt to European banks very much like that of Greece today. The First World War resulted in the Allied occupation of Istanbul

and ultimately an attempt to parcel up the remaining empire among European powers. Atatürk came to power as a westernising moderniser who saved the Anatolian heartland from European encroachment.

What followed were reforms in which citizens of the new Turkey learned to dress, speak, write and behave in new ways. Men donned hats instead of the fez, and women removed their headscarves. The alphabet changed, as did the language. Atatürk gave particular importance to liberating women.

Memoirs of the period tell of the missionary activities of educated elites, who in those early years accepted assignments as teachers and bureaucrats in remote areas of the country in order to set examples of the new, modern Turk.

Atatürk viewed the young country's biggest impediment to becoming modern as what he explicitly called the 'backwardness' of Islam. Nationalist histories attempted to prove that secularisation was not anathema to Turkish culture, indeed that Turks were already more 'western' than the west.

Atatürk and his cadres claimed that Turks' central Asian ancestors already had gender equality, and this essential equality was polluted by Islam. Doing away with women's head coverings and liberating women by government decree were, in this conception, ways of returning Turks to their 'true' nature.

But many Turks have been scathing of the idea that only by becoming secular and

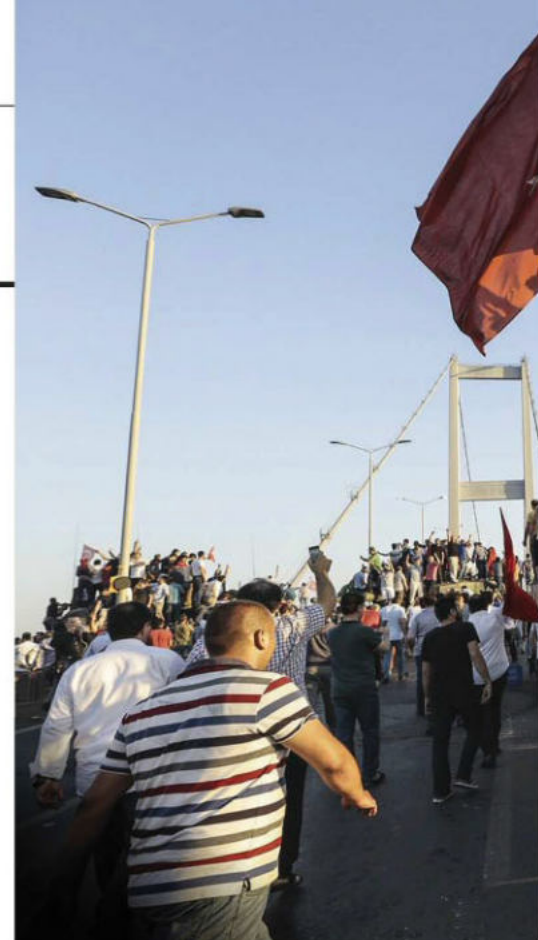
western can they be regarded as modern. Today's AK Party (which has a majority in Turkey's parliament) has, in turn, tried to show that modernity is not the sole property of the west. The massive projects that have transformed the Turkish landscape are touted as showing the 'greatness' of Turkey. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's bluster against foreign imposition and insult similarly results in gains at the polls.

There is a strong historical consciousness in Turkey of how 'the west' emerged through representing Turks as an Other. The historical memory of the Ottoman empire's attempted partition among European powers gives fertile ground to conspiracy theories stating that the EU and other powers want to divide the country.

When Erdoğan rants about the real and imagined insults of foreigners, he unfortunately taps a resentment that is only exacerbated by the insistence of EU politicians and pundits that Turkey can never be European. The problem is that Turks have always resented having to want to be.



Dr Rebecca Bryant is an associate professorial research fellow at the London School of Economics





Supporters of President Erdoğan capture an armoured personnel carrier during the attempted coup of 15–16 July. Unrest in Turkey is causing consternation across the west



A 1789 etching shows a performance of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, which hailed a Turkish pasha's benevolence



Such was English aristocrat Mary Wortley Montagu's admiration for Turkey that she had her portrait painted in Turkish costume

“While Christian Europeans were frequently at war with the Ottomans, periods of warfare alternated with busy commercial exchange

PROFESSOR LARRY WOLFF

After the recent coup attempt, with Turkey roiled by political unrest, and immersed in a tremendous refugee crisis that is also a part of Europe's own crisis, it appears all the more urgent to consider the historical relation between Turkey and Europe.

After 11 September 2001, there was new enthusiasm for American political scientist Samuel Huntington's emphasis on the 'clash of civilisations' that separated Christian Europe from the Muslim world, and in 2002 the former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing declared that Turkey "is not a European country".

In fact, Turkish history is intimately involved with Europe, and in the 18th century Enlightenment Europeans recognised a kinship with the Turks. For example, Mozart's 1782 opera *The Abduction from*

the Seraglio concluded with a Turkish pasha emancipating his European captives – which prompted them to celebrate his benevolence in the musical finale.

While Turkey today lies mostly in Asia, and its capital Ankara is located in Anatolia, for centuries the Ottoman Turkish empire was ruled by the sultans from Istanbul, their palace at Topkapi on the European bank of the Bosphorus. The Ottoman empire had a vast presence in Europe, including the lands of current Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia, Romania, and Hungary.

While Christian Europeans were frequently at war with the Ottomans, periods of warfare alternated with peaceful coexistence and busy commercial exchange. Venetian traders resided in their own quarter of Istanbul, while Turkish traders were present in Venice at the Fondaco dei Turchi, still standing today beside the Grand Canal.

The English traveller Mary Wortley Montagu found much to admire among the Ottomans, and notable resemblances to Europe. In the Turkish baths of Ottoman Sofia in 1717, Montagu praised the whiteness and the politeness of the naked women whose undressed sociability constituted a kind of "women's coffee house". She was one of many European women who had their portraits painted in Turkish costume.

European audiences were exposed to a huge repertoire of operas about Turks in the

18th and early 19th century. In 1814 Gioachino Rossini composed for La Scala the opera *Il Turco in Italia*, about a Turkish prince who came to Italy, not as a military conqueror, but as a romantic libertine. The Italian heroine engaged him in a flirtation that played upon their supposed cultural differences. She sang: "In Italia certamente non si fa l'amor così." He replied: "In Turchia sicuramente non si fa l'amor così." ("In Italy/ In Turkey one certainly doesn't make love like that.") And yet, as they repeated these two almost identical lines of verse in increasingly elaborate ornamentations, it became clear that the Turk and the Italian made love in exactly the same way.

Today, 200 years later, it would be well to recall this musical concurrence as a reminder that Europe and Turkey have often seemed to be, not culturally alien or remote, but intimately related. **H**



Professor Larry Wolff is a professor of history at New York University

DISCOVER MORE

BOOKS

- **The Singing Turk: Ottoman Power and Operatic Emotions on the European Stage** by Larry Wolff (Stanford, 2016)
- **The Emergence of Modern Turkey** by Bernard Lewis (OUP USA, 2001)

PAST NOTES

PARALYMPICS

OLD NEWS

The curious mystery of the Whitechapel skeletons

Hampshire Telegraph
15 October 1892

The Victorians were fascinated with the science of archaeology. This much is obvious through their attempts to make sense of ancient artefacts and bodies that were disturbed during the new urban developments in so many of our cities.

In 1892, Dr R MacDonald, coroner for north-east London, held an inquiry at the Town Hall, Shoreditch on the human remains that had recently been found in Flower and Dean Street, Spitalfields. Bits of seven skeletons in a box had been discovered by James Longbridge and his men. But were they evidence of foul play? The police inspector George Sebright had made inquiries, and spoken to an old lady who stated that 80 years earlier the house was occupied by the Spitalfields weavers, survivors of a 1765 riot against their new looms. The bones had been in the ground for 75–100 years and the skeletons were those of persons whose ages ranged from 18 months to 75 years.

The coroner said that it was only right and proper that a public inquiry should be held where the bones of this description were found, but he was afraid that the only course left to the jury was to return an open verdict.

News story sourced from *britishnewspaper archive.co.uk* and rediscovered by

Fern Riddell. Fern regularly appears on BBC Radio 3's *Free Thinking*



Archers take aim ahead of the 'Stoke Mandeville Games' in Aylesbury, 1950

As more than 4,300 athletes with disabilities prepare to compete in Rio in September, **Julian Humphrys** looks at the growth of the Paralympic movement

Did the Paralympics have a founding father?

Yes, the Paralympic equivalent of Baron Pierre de Coubertin was Dr Ludwig Guttman. A German Jew, he was a leading neurologist who came to England as a refugee with his family in 1939. After settling in Oxford, he opened the spinal injuries centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Aylesbury in 1944. Dr Guttman was a passionate believer in the use of sport as a means of building up strength and countering depression.

What did he do?

On 29 July 1948, the day of the opening of the 1948 London Olympics, Guttman organised an archery competition for 16 injured servicemen and women. In 1952, Dutch ex-servicemen joined in and the International Stoke Mandeville Games were founded.

Over the years disabled athletes from an increasing number of nations took part. In 1960, 400 athletes from 23 countries participated in the first Paralympic Games which were held in Rome, alongside the Rome Olympics. Since then the Paralympic movement has grown to such an extent that at London, in 2012, 4,200

athletes from 164 countries took part in 20 events.

Why the name 'Paralympics'?

Guttman originally called them the Paraplegic Games, as that reflected the disability of the first participants. However the name was no longer appropriate once athletes with other disabilities began to take part. Para is a Greek preposition meaning 'beside' and the word Paralympic reflects their status as the parallel games to the Olympics. Since the Seoul Summer Games of 1988 and the Albertville Winter Games of 1992 the Paralympics have always been held in the same venues as the Olympics.

Did any disabled sport exist before the Paralympics?

Yes, in cricket. In 1796, 1841 and 1848, matches between teams of one-legged and one-armed pensioners from the Greenwich naval hospital were arranged. Although it must be said that spectators primarily came to gawp at what they saw as an amusing spectacle, the participants appear to have been happy enough to play, not least because they were treated to an enormous dinner for doing so. **H**

ILLUSTRATION BY BEN JONES





Christopher
Ward

C5 Malvern Slimline Square

christopherward.co.uk

LETTERS

The woes of wet-nursing

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I read with interest Eugene Byrne's article on wet-nursing (*Miscellany*, July). Having been a voluntary breastfeeding counsellor for 36 years, I remember being fascinated by Valerie Fildes's books on wet-nursing and infant feeding, published in the 1980s. Dr Fildes referred back to the ancient doctors Soranus and Galen, who believed that breast and womb are joined by a mythical vein, given the Latin name *vasa menstrualis*. It was surmised from this that semen could travel up the vasa menstrualis and foul the milk of a nursing woman. This rubbish drove the wet-nursing industry for nearly 2,000 years! Ordinary lower-class women breastfed for centuries, though, and it was used as a method of contraception.

Dr Fildes also tells that, before the 19th century, a baby born to a wealthy family would be sent to a wet nurse's home to be breastfed while she continued to look after her own family. At that time the wet nurse's

youngest child would be at least a toddler whom she was supposed to have weaned.

However, by the 19th century rich parents wanted the wet nurse to live in their home, and to have a baby of her own of a similar age to theirs. Because the wet-nurse would not be expected to bring her own tiny baby to her wealthy employer's house, it would be sent instead to one of the infamous 'baby farms', where before long death was likely to follow. It was this trade of the life of the wet nurse's baby for that of the rich family's child that sparked campaigns against wet-nursing.

Gillian Smith, Halesowen

● We reward the letter of the month writer with our 'History Choice' book of the month. This issue it is *Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet* by Lyndal Roper. Read the review on page 69



Questions on power

I found some of your panel of historians rather pessimistic regarding Brexit (*The Historians' View*, August). Dominic Sandbrook claims that "historians will look back on 23 June as the day the United Kingdom died." Helen McCarthy foresees the possible rise of the far right. David Abulafia alone sees Brexit as a golden opportunity to make connections across the globe without having to ask the EU's permission.

I remember in 1975 campaigning alongside the late Tony Benn to leave the Common Market. When voting this time, his questions still rang in my ears. If people have power, he said, you should ask: who put you there? To whom are you accountable? How can I get rid of you? If the answers include: "you can't get rid of me" and "I'm accountable to virtually no-one", then we have a problem. It's a recipe for discontent and for treating laws with contempt,

and I would argue that this partly explains the growth of the far right in Europe. I believe that Benn's points apply far more today than they did in 1975, as Brussels continues to make inroads into the sovereignty of member states.

David Simmonds, Woking

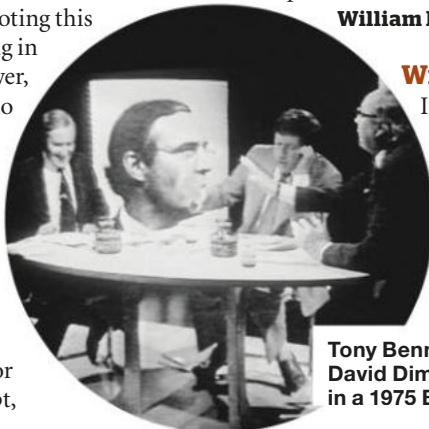
A popular revolt?

The article on the EU was very fine. I thought the event was summed up well in a description of the result I saw elsewhere as "a 21st-century peasants' revolt!"

William Ballantine, West Lothian

Wishful thinking

I very much enjoyed the piece, which set out the different viewpoints and showed that the UK's perceived sense of exceptionalism was



Tony Benn and Roy Jenkins (with David Dimbleby) debate the EEC in a 1975 BBC *Panorama* special

at the heart of the decision to vote to leave the EU.

However, I think David Abulafia lets wishful thinking get the better of him when he predicts the disintegration of the EU and calls the euro a failed currency. The pound has been devalued, forced out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, and lost over 10 per cent of its value against the euro after the Leave vote, prompting the Bank of England to consider a 0 per cent interest rate. Is the pound a failed currency?

Graeme Preston, Cyprus

Black history in schools

I assume Stephen Bourne knows little about state education in this country (*Letters*, August). Black History Month is taken very seriously; by the time they left the primary school where I taught, most of the children would have known about the achievements of (for example) Walter Tull, Mary Seacole and John Archer, the first black mayor in London. In fact, the children probably knew more about these lives than those of leaders or heroes such as Churchill, Attlee, Nightingale, Nelson, Elizabeth Fry and so on. This is the case at secondary schools, too – and not just ones with a majority of children who are of Afro-Caribbean descent.

We also taught history modules such as ancient Egypt and Benin alongside the Vikings and Tudor England. If there are few black history students at university, it is not because black historical figures have been ignored in schools.

K Healey, London

Advocating for Alexander...

I was amused but not surprised by the views expressed by your correspondent Christopher Bryant about Alexander the Great (*Letters*, August).

While it is true that Alexander had many faults – the murder of old comrades opposed to his pro-Persian policies springs to mind – to dismiss him as "no more than a...successful gang leader" is ludicrous. This is a man who had a vision of the fusion of the best of Greek and Persian ideas into a new, hybrid culture. The greatest expression of this multicultural ideal is the city that still bears his name and which, had the battle of Actium



Alexander the Great is shown in battle against the last Achaemenid Persian king, Darius III, in this Roman mosaic from the early centuries AD

ended differently, could have been the capital of the 'world' rather than Rome.

And the "far richer and more diverse" Achaemenids? This delightfully 'cultured' empire twice invaded Greece because the Greeks refused to bow to divine tyrants. It was led by a man who in a fit of pique had the waves whipped and who decapitated and crucified the body of a brave king. This wonderfully 'diverse' empire, in an early example of monotheistic bigotry, suppressed the religion of Egypt, where Alexander was greeted as a liberator from Persian oppression.

I'm all for reassessing the past, but replacing the old view of heroic Alexander defeating barbarians with Dr Bryant's gang leader Alexander terrorising cultured Persians is merely to replace one oversimplification with another.

Michael Pallett, Queensland, Australia

...and rehabilitating Haig

I write as someone who lost three uncles in the First World War.

I enjoyed the article refuting criticism of Haig (*The Somme: Was it Really a Monstrous Failure?* July). It is worth noting that after the war, outside the establishment, he was immensely popular. He refused honours until soldiers' pensions were improved, and played a part in establishing the Royal British Legion, becoming its first president. Until recently, Legion poppies

still bore the inscription 'Haig's Fund'.

Lloyd George took advantage of Haig's reticence and early death to make him a scapegoat for the establishment's many failings throughout the war. In the 1960s it became fashionable to foster Alan Clark's portrayal of First World War generals as 'donkeys'. Joan Littlewood, then Richard Attenborough, compounded this with *Oh! What a Lovely War*, and Ben Elton added to such perceptions with his General Melchett character in *Blackadder*.

Happily, your article and many recent books do what they can to restore Earl Haig's standing. Thank you.

David Housden, Canvey Island

Corrections

● In our illustration of Adolf Hitler (*History Hot 100*, July), he is shown wearing an Iron Cross with a swastika in the middle. As he won his Iron Cross during the First World War, it should have contained the imperial German 'W'. Thanks to James Fisher for spotting this error.

WRITE TO US

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SOCIAL MEDIA

What you've been saying on Twitter and Facebook



@HistoryExtra: How acceptable is artistic licence in history entertainment?

Simon Kingsnorth As a passionate history lover and a theatre director I don't like historical pieces that change facts to fit the story. That confuses people and does damage to historical figures

Susan M Morris Real history is far more interesting than overheated 'historical entertainment' that boils facts to mush. It is one thing to responsibly and plausibly interpret scenarios and characters when telling a story, it's quite another to fabricate or omit facts or events to fit a preconceived narrative

@HenrikSchilling Let my answer be a question: what would Blackadder be without artistic licence?

Mags Kondrat I prefer historical authenticity (but not necessarily accuracy) in what I watch, but I have no problem with writers taking a historical figure and playing 'what if' with them. But that is only when the work is clearly presented as fiction

Laura Goodlass If artistic licence makes history more accessible to the masses, I encourage it. Those who then gain an interest can discover the authentic facts for themselves, and for history enthusiasts that is half the fun!

@HistoryExtra: Many American universities do not require history majors to take a course in US history. What is your view?

Ashley Hickey A degree should teach people about how to study history generally: how to evaluate sources, about proper research methods, etc. Mandatory, in-depth study of their country's history shouldn't be required; people should be able to study what they're interested in

David Cooper As a retired US history teacher who has seen college students flub the most basic questions about American history, I think a course devoted to US history should be mandatory

Nick Milne In no other country would this even be an issue. Most Americans already have enough of an American-centric knowledge of history. I think it should be compulsory to study the histories of the rest of the world

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Michael Wood on... **the battle of the Somme**

“It’s the people’s collective memory that keeps the past alive”

“History as we receive it from books and TV is usually shaped by professional historians. But it has a separate life in the minds of the people, especially when it concerns great communal events. In few cases is this more obvious than with the First World War.

I found the Somme anniversary this summer especially poignant, with no living voices now to tell us what it was actually like. The warriors finally are all gone. Harry Patch, the last fighting Tommy of the war, died in 2009. We can listen to their voices, of course, many recorded in the 1960s for the wonderful BBC series *The Great War*. There we can still hear their tone: deferential, accepting their place in a class-ridden society; looking back as old men nearly half a century later to share the horror they experienced in the most matter of fact way; still quietly shocked by its utter pointlessness.

I was talking about it the other day with my mum’s friend Sylvia in her care home in Colchester. Sylvia was four at the time of the Somme. Still bright as a button at 104, she has vivid childhood memories of the Great War: the spooky appearance of the Zeppelins; the suppressed fears of the grown ups, not just about the western front, but also the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic, which nearly killed Sylvia’s mother; the joy of the Armistice when the maid came in waving her arms shouting “The war is over!” And again and again the sense of heroism and futility: the people’s experience.

Such thoughts sent me back to Paul Fussell’s *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975), one of the first modern psychohistories. Fussell writes about the British experience on the western front and how that became a central political, cultural – and psychological – influence on subsequent British history; how poets, writers and painters memorialised the heroic but meaningless suffering of the Great War, generating a myth that has become part of the fibre of all our lives. A memory to which we all belong.

But as Fussell shows, the myth came ultimately from

the real experience of the people. This is how communal memory works. No one was untouched, especially in the great northern cities like Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield, and mill towns like Burnley and Accrington.

On the first day of the Somme, the Accrington Pals incredibly lost 585 dead and wounded out of 700 men, and the memory of what people went through became a defining history of solidarity and identity – still marked on Armistice day at the haunting memorial in Oak Hill Park. There in the park 30 years ago I remember talking to two veterans. One said it broke his faith in God and government; the other thought the cause was right and would have done it again. You couldn’t better sum up what I heard from my grandparents’ generation.

All that was also part of my family memory in Manchester. My mum, the last of that generation in our family, died this summer. She was almost 97, born in 1919, as she liked to remind people, “the year the Great War *actually* ended”. Now I am only beginning to adjust to the idea that her voice is gone, and with it too her memories from her parents’ generation. For it is in this chain of transmission between generations that we keep past experience alive in the communal memory.

Which brings me back to how we receive our history. Joel Hurstfield, the historian of Elizabethan England, said that if you want to know about anybody’s life you need to know about the 20 years *before* they were born. In my case, that’s the 1930s Depression and the Second World War, the events that formed my parents’ habits of mind, and through them my own. These years shape you in ways you don’t quite ever see till you get older. That’s the way we receive our part of the collective memory – the memory to which we all belong.

In their professional work, historians agree and disagree, producing their reappraisals and re-evaluations. But whether it’s the Norman conquest, the Civil War, Boney or the Battle of Britain, the people don’t forget. The historians weigh their sources and make their judgments. But the people remember. **H**

.....
Michael Wood is professor of public history at the University of Manchester. His latest BBC Two series was *The Story of China*. He is now preparing a film on humanity’s oldest stories

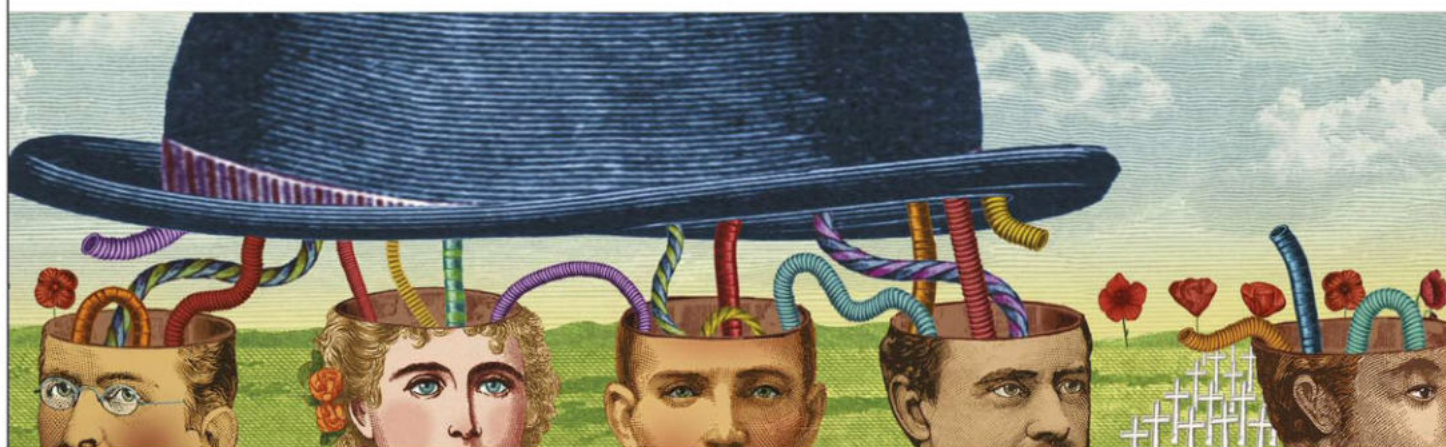


ILLUSTRATION BY FEMKE DE JONG

1666 WHEN BURN

The great escape

Londoners flee their burning homes in a contemporary painting by Dutch artist Lieve Verschuier. Frantic efforts to fight the flames quickly turned into an equally fevered search for a scapegoat

GETTY IMAGES

N LONDON ED WITH RAGE

As the Great Fire ravaged their homes in 1666, Londoners were gripped by terror, despair and fury. And, writes **Alexander Larman**, barely had the last flames been put out before their ire was being directed at the city's foreigners



The decisive moment in the Great Fire of London came on Tuesday 4 September 1666. St Paul's Cathedral had evaded destruction over the previous days, and provided sanctuary for scores of tradesmen,

who hoped that divine providence would protect them and that their refuge would go undamaged. Unfortunately, highly flammable pieces of wood had been placed against the cathedral's walls in preparation for planned building work. The scaffolding caught fire, and by nine o'clock, the flames had surrounded the building. After a couple of hours, the timbered roof beams caught fire and melted the lead roof; the enormous heat caused the walls and ceiling to explode. Vast chunks of masonry crashed to earth, destroying tombs and statues and shattering the cathedral's stained glass.

Charles II and his brother James, Duke of York watched with horror as the great building burned. On a practical level, the cathedral's destruction was a ruinously expensive disaster, which would take a huge amount of money to repair; the proposed renovation, itself a huge commitment for a depleted exchequer, would have been trifling in comparison. Yet more importantly, on a symbolic level, the burning of St Paul's could hardly have been a more devastating blow for the city and country. It appeared entirely possible that the inferno would remain unchecked, and could spread to devour

Whitehall itself, leaving London reduced to little more than a few disconnected streets and countless piles of rubble.

To many observers, it was obvious that the calamity had been sparked by divine retribution. Others, however, averred that the cause was something altogether more earthly...

Burning traitors

The Great Fire had begun on the night of 1 September at Thomas Farriner's bakery in Pudding Lane in the City. After he went to bed, Farriner awoke to find his house full of smoke, and swiftly evacuated his family. Small fires were common in the area, but what worsened the blaze was Pudding Lane's proximity to London Bridge, where many of the city's most flammable materials were stored, ready to be placed on ships for export.

By eight the following morning, the bridge itself was fully ablaze. Those watching closely might have seen the grisly spectacle of some of the severed heads of traitors illuminated by the flames below. The lord mayor, Sir Thomas Bloodworth, was summoned to view the blaze, but left without offering assistance, sneering: "A woman could piss it out."

Bloodworth was quickly proved wrong. The fire spread with inexorable force, and had soon destroyed City landmarks such as Watermen's Hall and the Post Office in Cloak Lane, Dowgate. Charles and James hurried by boat to see the damage; the distraught king had to be restrained from helping douse the fires by his attendants.

As streets were destroyed, the livelihoods of

wealthy and poor alike went up in smoke in moments. Soon, the Custom House and St Paul's fell victim to the flames. The noise and panic were indescribable.

That the fire didn't rage west and consume the seat of government was down to a mixture of human agency and good luck. First, Londoners blew up buildings on the Strand with gunpowder in order to isolate the most important structures and prevent their destruction. Then, early on 5 September, the wind dropped, checking the flames' advance further still.

By dawn on Thursday, the Great Fire had come to an end. Yet the time for recriminations and blame had just begun.

As ever with a disaster of this scale, the people sought a scapegoat, and the obvious culprits were the Catholics. Even during the fire, rumours spread that a papist plot to unseat Charles was under way. One Westminster School pupil, William Taswell, recorded that "the ignorant and deluded mob, who upon occasion were hurried [sic] away with a kind of frenzy, vented forth their rage against the Roman Catholics and Frenchmen".

As fists flew and shops were looted, the mob claimed that their acts of violence were motivated by patriotic fervour. Those suspected of Catholicism, as well as the French and Dutch, found themselves accused of starting fires virtually at random and were thrown into prison on the slightest pretext; unless, that is, they had already been beaten senseless by the enraged mob. One unfortunate man was torn to pieces in Moorfields because he was said to be carrying "flaming spheres"; these spheres were, in fact, nothing more than tennis balls.

Despite Charles addressing the largest of the makeshift refugee camps at Moorfields on Thursday and explicitly telling them that the

One man was torn to pieces because he was said to be **carrying "flaming spheres"**. These spheres were in fact tennis balls

THE GREAT FIRE: SIX KEY MOMENTS

1-2 September 1666

THE FLAMES SPREAD

The fire begins in Pudding Lane, and has reached London Bridge by early on the morning of the 2nd. The diarist Samuel Pepys, who lives on Seething Lane in the City, writes of how "I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire on this and the other side the end of the bridge", and says that the "lamentable fire" makes his "heart full of trouble".

2 September

PEOPLE FLEE IN PANIC

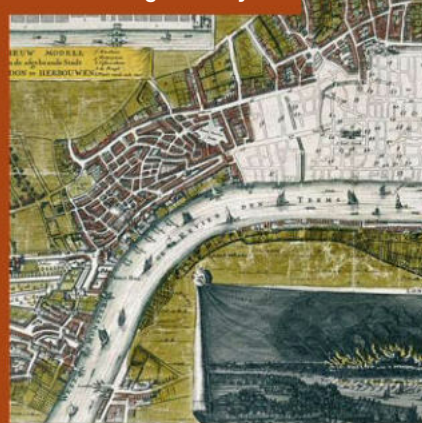
The power of the blaze is such that any attempt to stop it fails, and, with the lord mayor an incompetent figure, there is no clearly co-ordinated attempt to check its progress. Pepys describes how the "most horrid malicious bloody flame" has lit up the sky, and, as he watches displaced and panicking people swarming the streets with what little they can salvage, how "it made me weep to see it".

3 September

LANDMARKS BURN

With many of the city's most famous buildings destroyed – such as the famous Boar's Head tavern in Eastcheap, referred to by Shakespeare in *Henry IV* – paranoia grips the populace. The aristocrat Lady Anne Hobart tells a friend that "tis thought Fleet Street will be burnt by tomorrow... there was never so sad a sight, nor so doleful a cry heard, my heart is not able to express the tenth, nay the thousandth part of it".

A map of London in 1666 shows the extent of the damage when the fire blazed through the city





ABOVE: The Great Fire devastated huge swathes of London, including Ludgate prison, as shown in an 18th-century painting. RIGHT: Robert Hubert holds a fireball in a 1667 anti-Jesuit book. The Frenchman was executed for starting the fire, even though he wasn't in London at the time

GETTY IMAGES/MUSEUM OF LONDON

destruction had *not* been caused by any Catholic, French or Dutch conspiracy, suspicion lingered amid the panic. The need to apportion blame was affirmed judiciously with the spurious arrest of Robert Hubert, a French watchmaker, who was said to have confessed to beginning the fire deliberately as an agent of the pope.

Hubert was found guilty at his trial, despite

clear inconsistencies in the evidence against him, and swiftly executed at Tyburn. But it soon became embarrassingly clear that he had not even been in London at the time of the outbreak. What makes his fate even more tragic is that he was most likely to have been a Huguenot (French Protestant), and that his so-called 'confession' was extracted under duress. Charles's mentor and counsellor the



4 September **THE KING STEPS IN**

Charles appoints a Privy Council to attempt to keep some form of order, but chaos reigns, with people trying to grab their possessions and escape from London on carts. Thomas Vincent, a Puritan minister, declares that the fire signifies God's anger, and his intention to "destroy London with fire". The diarist John Evelyn wishes: "God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw about 10,000 houses in one flame."

4 September **ST PAUL'S SUCCUMBS**

After the destruction of St Paul's Cathedral and the Guildhall, the fire seems unstoppable. The only good fortune is that it does not destroy the gunpowder store in the Tower of London, which would, in Evelyn's words, "not only have beaten down and destroyed all the bridge, but sunk and torn all the vessels in the river, and rendered the demolition beyond all expression for several miles about the country".

5 September **THE INFERNO WANES**

At last, the wind dies and the blaze has begun to extinguish itself. The schoolboy William Taswell described how the ground around the wreck of St Paul's was "so hot as almost to scorch my shoes", and lingering small fires gave many the impression that it continued. Pepys, looking out at the ruined city, described it as "the saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw; everywhere great fires, oil cellars and brimstone and other things burning".

The Great Fire of London

Earl of Clarendon wrote of him that he was “a poor distracted wretch, weary of his life, and chose to part with it in this way”.

Suspicion reached Whitehall, making it even more difficult for Charles to express his Catholic sympathies. Despite his gallant behaviour in helping quench the fire, rumours spread that the king’s brother James was a papist stooge, and his “gay countenance” during the blaze was held up as evidence that he was fanning the flames, rather than fighting them. (There was a nugget of truth at the heart of the allegations: the Duke of York was indeed a Catholic sympathiser, and would convert to the faith in 1668.)

Soon the rumours – and the virulently anti-Catholic sentiment that they were whipping up – were causing ructions in parliament. On 28 September, a motion was carried for the immediate deportation of Catholic priests and Jesuits. Meanwhile, all members of the Commons were forced to take Anglican communion and restate their belief in the English church on pain of immediate arrest.

But Catholics weren’t alone in taking the blame for starting the Great Fire of London. Soon the people had found another scapegoat – and that was God himself who, it was claimed, was wreaking his vengeance on Charles’s court for its decadence.

Ever since the Restoration, there had been murmurings that divine judgment was due. While some people had relished the free-spirited permissiveness of the early 1660s, others were less enamoured of what they saw as a combination of the restrictive and the hypocritical. Rumours of unrestrained libidinousness at Whitehall sat uneasily with the uncertain implementation of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* and continued persecution of dissenters. The English defeat earlier that year in the Four Days’ battle, one of the central conflicts of the Second Anglo-Dutch War of 1665–67, was also put down to God’s disfavour. Despite the fact that this reversal could most easily be blamed on inexperienced naval commanders (the Duke of Albemarle and Prince Rupert), it proved another means of attacking an unpopular monarch.

Pamphleteers and booksellers made a good profit out of sensationalistic works that prophesied fire and brimstone raining down on London in punishment for the city’s sins. Almanacs talked darkly of a year of fire and blood. The Quaker seer, the late Humphrey Smith, had had a vision, warning that “in the foundation of all her buildings and there was none could quench it... The burning thereof was exceeding great... All the tall buildings fell and it consumed all the lofty things therein... And the fire continued, for though all the lofty part was brought down yet there



A drawing by William Lilly, in which he apparently predicted the Great Fire of London 15 years before it occurred. Lilly would later be accused of starting the fire to enhance his reputation as an astrologer

The Quakers, who had been persecuted since the Restoration, were especially certain in their belief that **the blaze was a sign from God**



Quaker founder George Fox believed that the conflagration was divine punishment for London’s wickedness

was much old stuff and parts of broken down, desolate walls, which the fire continued burning against.”

While few were foolish enough to state their convictions publicly, for fear of being accused of conspiracy against the king, there was a growing feeling in the sweltering heat that a reckoning was coming.

The lawyer Nathaniel Hobart, writing to his friend the politician Ralph Verney shortly after the blaze, talked of how “God was not pleased, & we must submit to his will”. The Puritan minister Thomas Vincent took a perverse joy in watching the main shopping area, the Royal Exchange, fall, writing: “The glory of the merchants is now invaded with much violence... by-and-down [sic] fall all the Kings upon their faces... with such a noise as was dreadful and astonishing.”

A glittering sword

The Quakers, who had been persecuted since the Restoration, were especially certain in their belief that the blaze was a sign from God. Their founder, George Fox, recently released from prison, described the fire in his journal, claiming that “I saw the angel of the Lord with a glittering drawn sword southward, as before expressed. The people of London were forewarned of this fire: yet few laid it to heart, or believed it; but rather grew more wicked, and higher in pride.” Satisfied that the destruction was a punishment for this wickedness, he wrote that: “The Lord has exercised his prophets and servants by his power, and showed them signs of his judgments.”

Fox was brave to have written down such sentiments; had they been made public, he would certainly have been arrested and probably executed for treason.

Others unsympathetic to England and London rejoiced in the destruction. An anonymous Spanish writer, probably an ambassador, wrote a pro-Catholic account of the fire, “The new and true account of the great fire that has engulfed the great city of London”, in which he stated: “At the sight of a Catholic temple the fire acknowledged itself to be conquered,” and wished that: “May God open their eyes to the truth, and enable them to take a lesson from the destruction of their own 140 churches and the safety of the one Roman Catholic temple.”

The real cause of the fire was less dramatic. The summer of 1666 had been an unusually hot and dry one, and London’s buildings, in the City at least, were badly maintained and filthy. They were covered in an omnipresent cloud of smoke, a byproduct of the innumerable small fires that were lit by tradesmen and hawkers in the course of their everyday work. These tightly packed and ramshackle



A woodcut from 1612 shows firefighters combating an inferno in Devon. Firefighting techniques in 17th-century England lagged behind other parts of Europe. In London, 1666, the brass hand pumps used to douse the flames held less than a gallon of water each

structures, haphazardly extended over the years, were each made from timber, with the wood cloaked in pitch in an attempt to render it less susceptible to water, and therefore highly flammable. Brittle after the summer heat, both the public and private buildings were swiftly consumed by fire.

Had Sir Thomas Bloodworth acted with more alacrity and ordered the burning houses to be torn down to create firebreaks, the damage, while serious and costly to make good, would have been merely in the thousands of pounds. Yet, because he prevaricated, put off by the prospect of having to obtain the consent of the buildings' owners, all was lost. It did not help that London had no firefighting service, unlike in Nuremberg, where a fire engine was invented in 1651. Instead,

primitive fire-hooks were the principal means available of tearing down burning buildings. The brass hand pumps used to douse the flames held less than a gallon of water each.

London, of course, rose again. But the Great Fire represented the end of the excitement and joy of the Restoration. It was replaced by an attitude of cynicism and distrust, and widespread anti-Catholic sentiment. This cocktail would explode spectacularly in 1678 with the Popish Plot, when Titus Oates claimed – falsely, as it turned out – that a Roman conspiracy had taken root at the heart of the English establishment, with the aim of assassinating the king and placing a Catholic monarch on the throne. His allegations were wild and lacked proof, but a frightened and credulous court chose to believe them,

leading to national panic. Had the fire never occurred, it is doubtful that Oates would ever have achieved his aims. Instead, its aftereffects lingered for years, in unpredictable and violent ways. **H**

Alexander Larman is an author and journalist whose books include *Restoration: 1666: A Year in Britain*, published by Head of Zeus in April

DISCOVER MORE

RADIO

► The documentary **Cities from the Ashes**, which describes how London was rebuilt after the Great Fire of London, will air on Radio 4 on 30 August



As the fallout from the Black Death threw England into turmoil, a woman with a man's name produced a piece of literature so beautiful that it still resonates with readers across the world today. **Janina Ramirez** hails Julian of Norwich

The female Chaucer

Walled-in wonderwoman

Julian of Norwich, the first known woman to write a book in English, is depicted in the Church of Saints Andrew and Mary in Langham, Norfolk. Julian penned her book after deciding to be walled into a cell for the rest of her life

History is largely dominated by men. Kings, popes, bishops, monks, knights... they have defined the course of history, and they have written history. Despite the valiant attempts of feminists in the past century, writing women into history is a difficult process. Individuals who managed to break the mould are now widely celebrated: Joan of Arc, Æthelflæd, Elizabeth I. Yet for every one woman written into history there are many hundreds of men that drown out their achievements.

And so it is with literature. The canonical texts of the past two millennia are largely written by male authors. We read Shakespeare, Milton, Keats, Joyce. The father of English literature is Chaucer. But who is the mother? The first known woman to write a book in English is an obscure anchoress from Norwich, whose very name has been given a masculine twist: Julian.

The word 'anchoress' comes from the Greek meaning 'to retire', and anchoresses gave up their lives on Earth to be walled up in a cell until death. They would be witnesses at their own funerals, receiving the last rites, and have the door to their room sealed or bricked up. They could not leave again on pain of excommunication.

Julian most probably took her name from the church in which she was walled up for decades, St Julian's Church off King's Street. She wrote a mystical text in the late 14th century entitled *Revelations of Divine Love*, but it is virtually unheard of. Certainly students don't have a copy of it propped up next to *The Canterbury Tales* as they learn about the birth of English literature.

Yet it is one of the most stunning literary achievements of the medieval period. This book could have been written in any time, any place, by a male or a female writer, and it would still be considered an incredible work. The fact that it was written during one of the most turbulent times in European history, simply adds to its mystery.

Julian was born in 1343, and died around 1416. Her life encompassed a period in which the wheels were coming off church and state, with disease, corruption, war and fear rife.

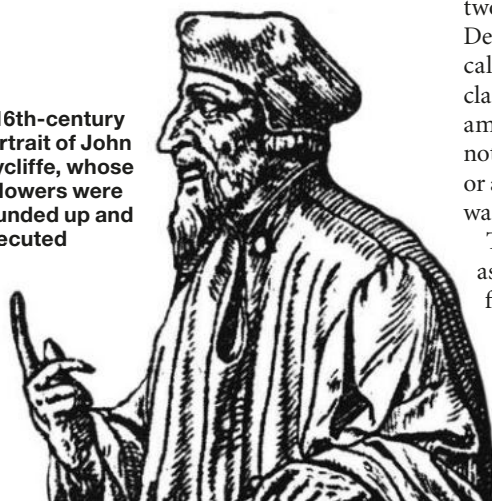
Many of the wider problems of this period were triggered in 1349 when the Black Death reached British shores. It decimated the population of Julian's hometown, with figures suggesting that 7,000 of 12,000 occupants died. Norwich was probably worse hit than



Death strangles a victim in an illustration from 1377, when England was still reeling from the impact of the Black Death

Revelations of Divine Love was one of the most stunning literary achievements of the medieval period

A 16th-century portrait of John Wycliffe, whose followers were rounded up and executed



most cities because of the regular stream of ships from Flanders, with which they had very close trade links.

Norwich was a vibrant mercantile city, the second largest after London at this point, but the effect of the Black Death and subsequent plagues would have lasting repercussions for its social and economic stability.

The ancient feudal system of medieval England was under threat, as a smaller number of peasants were able to demand better pay and rights to continue to work. Then, when Edward III relaunched the Hundred Years' War – and took much of the nobility across the English Channel to fight with him in France – many towns and villages were left leaderless, as both temporal and spiritual guidance was hard to come by.

Tensions that had been rising for decades spilled over in 1381 with the Peasants' Revolt. Julian would have witnessed the riots in Norwich, where Geoffrey Litster, 'The King of the Commoners', and his followers took the castle, raiding houses, monasteries and churches across the city.

Litster was ultimately defeated at the battle of North Walsham, suppressed by Julian's own bishop, the tyrannical Henry Despenser, known as 'The Fighting Bishop'. Once he had led his troops against the rebels in Norwich, he personally supervised while Litster was tortured, hanged, drawn and quartered. He imposed some stability back on the city with an iron fist, but then unsettled it once again by taking the warriors on an ultimately futile crusade. His mission was prompted by the other major event rocking late 14th-century Europe: the Great Western Schism.

The great schism

From 1378 to 1417, so through most of Julian's adult life, there was a divide in Christendom as two or more popes claimed the papacy. The Schism was triggered when Gregory XI returned the papacy to Rome from Avignon, where it had been established from the turn of the century. This led to rival popes in the two sees, and men, including Bishop Despenser and the citizens of Norwich, were called to fight in support of one or other claimant. The schism would have been felt among Christians in Norwich, as they could not clearly designate their prayers to one pope or another while the international church warred within itself.

The community was also looking inwards, as heretics became increasingly persecuted following the death of John Wycliffe in 1384. He had called for a transformation of the church, with no relics or pilgrimage,



Julian would have set eyes on this 14th-century altarpiece – the *Despensers Reredo* – in Norwich Cathedral. Focused on suffering and sin, this work of art offered a very different view of Christianity to Julian's vision of love lying at the root of everything

no payment for indulgences, and access to the Scriptures through translation into English. Those who followed his teachings (known as Lollards) were rounded up and executed. The Lollards' Pit was close to Julian's cell on King's Street, and she would have been acutely aware that any whiff of heresy would be sniffed out and punished.

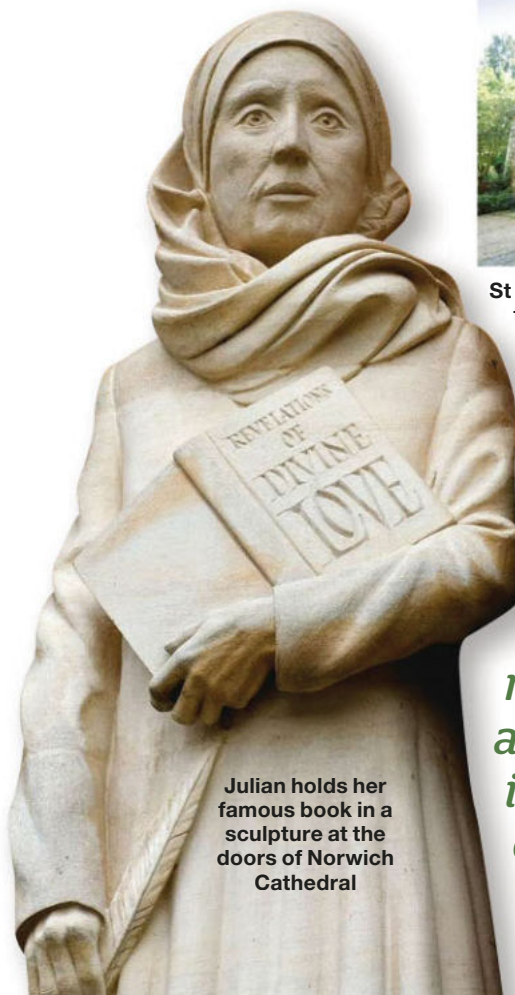
So Julian lived through a time when the church was divided, communities were imploding and death was indiscriminate. Yet in the midst of this chaos she wrote a calm, optimistic and loving book. In it she stresses that God sees no sin, he is both mother and father, and that love is the root of everything.

"The greatest honour we can give Almighty God is to live gladly because of the knowledge of his love," she writes. In another section, she declares: "God loved us before he made us; and his love has never diminished and never shall."

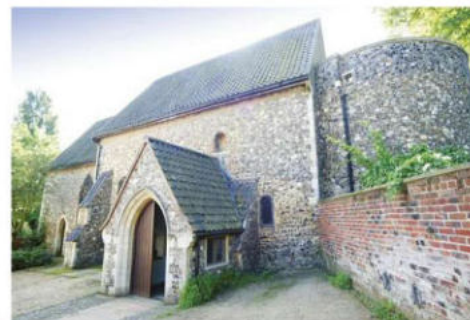
The meaning of love

At a time when the Last Judgment loomed heavy over church doorways, Julian argued that a loving God could not condemn those he loves to damnation for sin. In the 'Parable of the Lord and Servant' she describes how sin is the gateway through which a fallen person can understand what it means to be loved; to be picked up, dusted down and held close.

Julian does not frenetically encourage her readers to look to their souls in imminent belief of an End of Days. Instead, she sees a



Julian holds her famous book in a sculpture at the doors of Norwich Cathedral



St Julian's Church in Norwich. It was in this building that Julian was sealed up in a cell, unable to leave on pain of excommunication

Julian stresses that God sees no sin, he is both mother and father, and that love is the root of everything



A 17th-century copy of a lost original manuscript of *Revelations of Divine Love*. The ideas contained within these pages are now enjoying a global renaissance, says Janina Ramirez

longer narrative, in which ultimately “all shall be well” for we are loved.

In one vision she sees the universe in a hazelnut, which she holds in the palm of her hand. It remains safe, and humanity continues to persevere, because it is part of a bigger scheme held together by love. This is radical stuff.

Dressed as a nun

We know virtually nothing about Julian’s early life, but she does provide a few clues in the *Revelations*. Although she is often depicted dressed as a nun, she was more probably a pious laywoman who chose to become an anchoress around the age of 40. Before this she could have had one or more husbands, and even children, which is suggested by the homely comparisons she makes throughout her book. One suggestion is that she was Julian of Erpingham, sister of an Agincourt knight and member of a wealthy family in Norfolk.

But whether we identify her with an individual or not, we *do* know what happened to her at one important moment. On 8 May 1373 she was lying on her deathbed, and received the last rites. She may have been afflicted by one of the later plagues that swept through Norwich. She thought she was going to die, was paralysed and could hardly move her eyes. The curate held a crucifix in front of her, and this triggered a set of 16 revelations that would form the basis of her meditations for the rest of her life.

Her visions could be explained as hallucinations brought about through fever, but to

Julian they were real and they were a gift from God. She recovered from her sickness, but some years later took the decision to become an anchoress.

It was a drastic decision, but there were benefits for Julian. She was in her forties by the time she became an anchoress, and would have had enough independent wealth to sustain her and a maid who would look after her daily needs. She would not have to marry again or undertake the potentially deadly procedure of medieval childbirth, and she would have the time and freedom to meditate, read and write. Women could not attend university – they couldn’t even get a decent education – so becoming an anchoress meant that, although she was physically restricted, her intellect could be free.

The Protestant Reformation led to the destruction of many Catholic texts. Julian’s was just the sort of mystical literature targeted by reformers, who felt all knowledge should be drawn directly from the Scriptures. Yet while many texts like Julian’s have no doubt been lost to the flames, hers was guarded by a group of brave young Catholics. Gertrude More, granddaughter of Thomas More, played a particularly important role, as did a Scottish Presbyterian woman Grace Warrack, who was responsible for the printed version of *Revelations of Divine Love*, which only appeared at the turn of the 20th century.

Julian’s text is enjoying an incredible revival. Her work recently inspired the pope, and the Queen has her words on a stained glass window in front of her when she prays at the Chapel Royal.

Revelations of Divine Love is now available in a wonderful new translation, and her ideas are spreading around the world, influencing Christians and non-Christians alike. Her most famous phrase is something we all need to hear today: “All shall be well, all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well.” **H**

Dr Janina Ramirez is a historian and TV presenter. She will be discussing Julian of Norwich at BBC *History Magazine’s* History Weekends in York and Winchester this autumn – see historyweekend.com

DISCOVER MORE

BOOKS

► *Revelations of Divine Love*

by Julian of Norwich (CreateSpace, 2014)

► *Julian of Norwich: A Very Brief History*

by Janina Ramirez (SPCK, 2016)

TELEVISION

► Janina Ramirez’s recent

BBC Four documentary on

Julian of Norwich is available on the BBC iPlayer



Women with a hotline to God

Julian wasn’t the only woman to experience visions in the Middle Ages



Hildegard receives a vision and dictates to her scribe

A visionary polymath

Born in 1098, **Hildegard of Bingen** was a German Benedictine abbess known for her work in music, astrology, linguistics, natural history and medicine. She received numerous visions that she wrote up in a series of powerful books.

Nivelles’ miracle-worker

Marie of Oignies (1177–1213) was born in Nivelles in modern-day Belgium, and was the founder of the Beguines, a group of pious laywomen who cared for the sick. Her life was recorded by her male confessor, and in it he charts the miracles she performed and visions she experienced.

The sensual celibate

Born in Bishop’s Lynn around 1373, **Margery Kempe** visited Julian in her cell when she was 30 and the anchoress was approaching the end of her life. She was married and had 14 children, but her husband agreed to a celibate relationship. Her visions of Christ were highly sensual and she was afflicted with uncontrollable tears, which made her a problem for the established church.

The pride of Europe

Brigid of Sweden is now one of the six patron saints of Europe, and lived from 1303–73. She was the daughter of a famous knight, married and had eight children. When she was 10 she received the first of her visions, and she went on to found the Bridgettine Order.

Brigid of Sweden is one of Europe’s patron saints



OUR FIRST WORLD WAR

Rebels and red skies

In part 28 of his personal testimony series, **Peter Hart** takes us back to September 1916, when conscientious objectors were sentenced to hard labour and a Zeppelin menaced London. Peter will be tracing the experiences of 20 people who lived through the First World War – via interviews, letters and diary entries – as its centenary progresses

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES ALBON



Harold Bing

Born in Croydon in 1897, Harold was brought up a pacifist, following the philosophical views of Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy. When war broke out in 1914 he was 16 years old. The following year he left school to begin work at a London insurance firm.

Harold Bing was a conscientious objector whose case for exemption from military service had been refused by the local tribunals. In September 1916, the wheels of the conscription process had begun to turn.

“When I didn’t turn up at the recruiting office on the day for which I was summoned, I was arrested and fined 40 shillings. An escort arrived from the East Surrey Regiment and took me off to Kingston Barracks. The following morning, I was formally ordered, in the presence

of two non-commissioned officers, to put on army uniform. I declined, and was formally charged and remanded for trial by court martial.

In September 1916, at his court martial, Bing was sentenced to six months of imprisonment with hard labour.

“I spent my 19th birthday in the guardroom at Kingston Barracks. We were marched out into the square before a battalion, where the proceedings were read out – the crime, the punishment and so on – to act as a deterrent to the other soldiers. We were then escorted to Wormwood Scrubs prison, where all the conscientious objectors had been gathered, to serve our sentences.

Many of the ‘absolutist’ conscientious objectors – who refused to accept the offer of a position in the Army Reserve as it acknowledged the conscription system – would remain in prison for the rest of the war.



Thomas Louch

Thomas was born in Geraldton, Western Australia in 1894. When war broke out he joined the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), trained in Egypt and was injured at Gallipoli. Commissioned with the 51st Battalion, he arrived on the western front in June 1916.

Lieutenant Thomas Louch was an intelligence officer with 51st Battalion when they were ordered to capture Mouquet Farm at dawn on 3 September 1916. Underneath the old buildings were strengthened, vaulted cellars, where the garrison withdrew whenever there was shelling. On returning to HQ, Louch was caught in a German gas attack.

“I ran into a flurry of gas shells along the communication trench – my first experience of gas. In those days,



A gas sentry rings an alarm on the western front, June 1916. Gas helmets of the day comprised a hood impregnated with chemicals, tucked into a tunic

the gas helmet was a hood, impregnated with chemicals, which you put over your head and tucked into the neck of your tunic. Doing this at night, you were to all intents and purposes blinded. I was in a hurry to get away from the shelling so, after trying the helmet on, I discarded it and ran through the gas to battalion HQ, where I arrived breathless and choking. I soon recovered, but my throat was sore for days.

The attack started at 5.10am. The barrage could not be faulted and, following close behind it, the leading companies went through to the final objective. The first reports indicated complete success. But then, hordes of Germans emerged from the cellars – and the bombers and the support company were unable to cope. The German defences were re-established; we lost touch with the leading companies, and they became completely cut off. The only survivors were men who had been wounded earlier on.

PICTURE CONSULTANT: EVERETT SHARP/GETTY IMAGES



"I stood there, listening, when I was hit by a bullet which came from the captured German trenches"



Harold Hayward

Born the son of a farrier on 12 February 1897, Harold attended Colston School in Bristol and planned a career in teaching. Instead, he signed up with the 12th Gloucestershire Regiment, which joined the western front in November 1915. By July 1916, they were in the Somme.

Private Harold Hayward became a victim of the Somme while serving with the 12th Gloucestershire Regiment. After an attack on 3-4 September in the Guillemont sector, there was such chaos, the colonel went forward to try and find out what was happening. Hayward was his runner.

nature of his injury by one of the hospital visitors.

“There was a lady from one of the ‘county’ families [aristocracy] who came in once a week. She was rather nosey and wanted to know everything. On her first visit she said: “Where were you wounded?” Of course she couldn’t see any bandages so I just pointed down under the bedclothes hoping that would be sufficient. The next week she said: “Where were you wounded?” I knew what she was after and I said: “Guillemont!” Finally, the next week she pointed and said: “But where are you wounded?” By now I was a bit fed up with this continual questioning, so I said: “Madam, if you’d been wounded where I’ve been wounded, you wouldn’t have been wounded at all!” All the fellows in the ward guffawed somewhat loudly and the lady stormed out of the ward! **H**

Peter Hart is the oral historian at the Imperial War Museum

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TV AND RADIO

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“The colonel said to me, “You’re to go and find how far away the next troops on the right are – I think they’re French. Find out what their dispositions are, whether they’re going to retire, whether they’ve got another planned attack – can this gap be filled?” I wondered whether my third-form French would carry me through. The colonel was facing where the Germans were and I stood there, listening, when I was hit by a bullet which came from the captured German trenches. A German left behind in one of their deep dugouts had come up, seen the colonel and let fly. I was wounded in the scrotum. The bullet had come up off the ground, went through a cigarette tin and through me. I was carried by my officer to the dugout. He put my field dressing on and reassured me that nature provides two – just like having two eyes.

The much reassured Hayward was evacuated back to England and put in the Lincoln General Hospital. Here, he soon began to resent the intrusive questioning into the

Gabrielle ‘Bobby’ West



Gabrielle ‘Bobby’ West was born in 1890, the daughter of a vicar. A member of the Red Cross, in January 1916 she set up a canteen at the Royal Aircraft Factory, Farnborough. In March 1916, she was appointed night manager of the canteens at Woolwich Arsenal.

On the night of 2-3 September 1916, while she was working at the canteen at the Woolwich Arsenal, Bobby West saw a strange sight in the night skies.

“We were just going back to our own hut when we heard wild cheering and saw the whole sky turn red. Then we saw the Zeppelin in flames to the north. She just came floating gently down until a big piece of burning stuff fell off, and then she nosedived to the earth, and it was all dark again except for two little red lights twirling madly about where she fell. I never heard such a noise in my life.

All the hooters in the Arsenal and on the barges sounded at once and all the workers in the

Arsenal roared and shrieked. All the boys in the YMCA hostel up the road sang *Tipperary*, and all the neighbours scuttled about congratulating each other. Even staid respectable Buckie and I danced around each other and crowed. Later, we heard that the twirling red lights were Robinson and another airman doing a sort of war dance of loops and spirals over their enemy’s remains.

What they had seen was Lieutenant William Leefe Robinson shooting down the Schütte-Lanz SL 11, a small variant of Zeppelin. It marked the beginning of the end of the Zeppelin menace over London. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his feat.

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BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE

THE GREAT VIKING TERROR

Until AD 865, **VIKING RAIDERS'** modus operandi in the British Isles was simple - they came, they saw, they plundered, and then they sped away back over the sea. But that year something changed. Small bands of looters evolved into a massive armed force and, worse still for their terrified victims, they had every intention of staying put. **Julian D Richards** and **Dawn Hadley** describe what happened when the 'Viking Great Army' arrived on English shores





This detail from the side of a sledge in a ninth-century Viking burial shows two men fighting. In the 860s and 870s, the Vikings would bring war to England's four kingdoms on a massive scale

During the winter of AD 873–74, a Viking warrior met a gruesome death, probably in an attack on a Mercian royal shrine at Repton. He was a big man, almost 6 feet tall, and at least 35–45 years old. But in the shieldwall his head was vulnerable. He suffered a massive blow to the skull and, as he reeled from that, the point of a sword found the weak spot in his helmet – the eye slit in the visor, gouging out his eye, and penetrating the back of the eye socket, into his brain. While he lay on the ground, a second sword blow sliced into his upper thigh, between his legs, cutting into his femur and probably slicing away his genitals.

After the battle, the slain Viking warrior's comrades buried him next to the Mercian shrine in what is now the parish church of St Wystan, where he lay for over a thousand years – until excavated by archaeologists.

The man in Grave 511 was buried with his head to the west, his hands together on his pelvis. He wore a necklace of two glass beads and an amulet in the shape of a Thor's hammer. Around his waist was a belt, from which had probably been suspended a key and two knives – one of a folding-type, like a modern Swiss-army penknife.

The other warriors had placed his sword back in its wooden fleece-lined scabbard, and laid it by his left side, where it had doubtless hung in life. They also carefully put the tusk of a wild boar between his thighs, to replace what he had lost in battle; he had died a warrior's death, and was destined for the pleasures of Valhalla. More mysteriously, they rested the wing bone of a jackdaw lower down, between his legs.

A younger man, perhaps the warrior's shield-bearer, was buried adjacent to him in order to accompany him to the next world.

Finally, the burial party built a stone cairn over the graves, incorporating fragments of an Anglo-Saxon cross that they had deliberately smashed. They also erected a wooden marker between the graves so that all would know who lay there. There the burials remained undisturbed, and perhaps still visible, for generations.

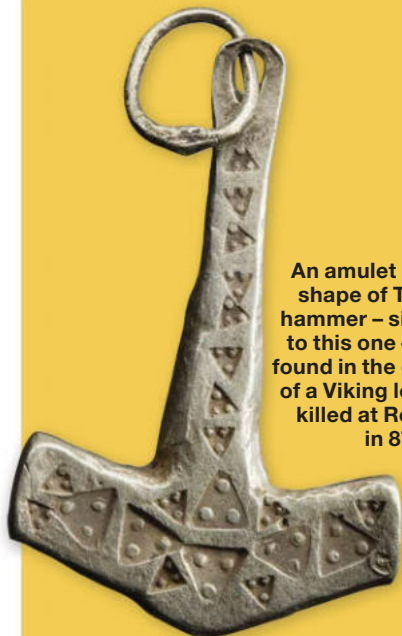
Game-changing tactic

Taken in isolation, these Viking graves tell us little about ninth-century England – they are merely the grisly results of one bloody incident in a period characterised by violence. Yet viewed alongside a succinct reference to the events that led to the Vikings' deaths in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, they soon become something more powerful altogether – a rare insight into the arrival on these shores of a force that would change Anglo-Saxon

A coin depicting King Alfred, who defeated Guthrum's marauding army



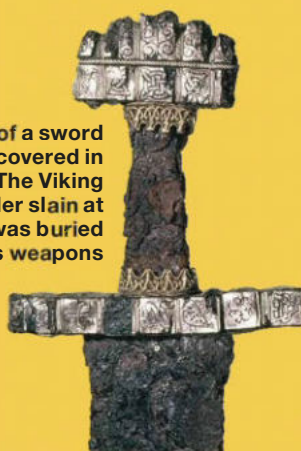
An amulet in the shape of Thor's hammer – similar to this one – was found in the grave of a Viking leader killed at Repton in 873–74



Ninth-century weights found in East Yorkshire. The Vikings were skilled merchants as well as raiders



The hilt of a sword discovered in Denmark. The Viking leader slain at Repton was buried with his weapons



England for ever, the Viking Great Army.

"In this year," the Chronicle declares, "the army went from Lindsey to Repton and took up winter quarters (*wintersetl*) there, and drove King Burgred across the sea... And they conquered all that land... And the same year they gave the kingdom of the Mercians to be held by Ceolwulf, a foolish king's thegn; and he swore oaths to them and gave hostages."

The excerpt is full of references to this game-changing development. We know that King Burgred fled to Rome after his kingdom was attacked by marauding Vikings. And we believe that Ceolwulf was a puppet king, put on the Mercian throne by the Vikings for the very good reason that he would do what he was told.

Yet it is the use of "army" and "winter quarters" that make this particular Viking attack stand out from all that had gone before. This was no small band of raiders launching a lightning strike on an unsuspecting population before disappearing with its loot back to Scandinavia. No, this was a mighty military force made up of hundreds, if not thousands, of warriors, and the fact that it decided to bed down on what is now the grounds and cloisters of Repton school, suggests that it was here to stay.

Rival powers

In the mid-ninth century, England was not a single kingdom. Instead it was made up of four rival powers: East Anglia, Wessex (in the south and west), Mercia (including London and the Midlands), and Northumbria, to the north. Anglo-Saxon England was mainly rural and its wealth was derived largely from the wool trade. There were a few trading sites, or *wics*, that we might call towns. These include Ipswich, Eoforwic (York), Hamwic (Southampton) and Aldwych (the Anglo-Saxon trading port of London, now the Strand). But the majority of the population lived in dispersed rural settlements, as part of large estates owned by the king or the church.

Although capable of great works of manuscript and metalwork art, England was not industrialised. There were some imports, including German wine and lava millstones, but most everyday items were made locally. Most pottery, for example, comprised crude handmade and low-fired wares for local consumption. However, the Anglo-Saxon kings were Christians, and their rich monasteries – often placed in vulnerable coastal locations such as Lindisfarne, Monkwearmouth, and Jarrow – had been targeted by Viking raiding parties from the end of the eighth century.

Initially these were hit-and-run affairs, focused on portable wealth – church silver and slaves – and the forces involved were

The Viking leaders reasoned that England **would provide easy pickings**. In that, they were right

fairly small. The Vikings hailed from across present-day Scandinavia, and their slender longships – swift and shallow – allowed them to cross the North Sea and sail upriver to attack the heartland of England.

Occasionally the Vikings overwintered in England – on the Isle of Thanet in 850, and the Isle of Sheppey in 855. However, the so-called ‘Great Army’ that landed in East Anglia in 865 – the one that put Burgred to flight and over-wintered in Repton – was of a different magnitude, and had a different strategy. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us that it had previously been campaigning in continental Europe but Charles the Bald, Holy Roman Emperor, strengthened Frankish defences and established a mobile cavalry force. The Viking leaders therefore appear to have decided that England, divided by internecine warfare, would provide easier pickings.

They were right. Soon after landing in East Anglia, the Viking Great Army took horses and travelled north, seizing York in 866. Next it swept south to Nottingham in 867, before returning to York the year after. Over the following three years it would attack Thetford (869), Reading (870) and London (871).

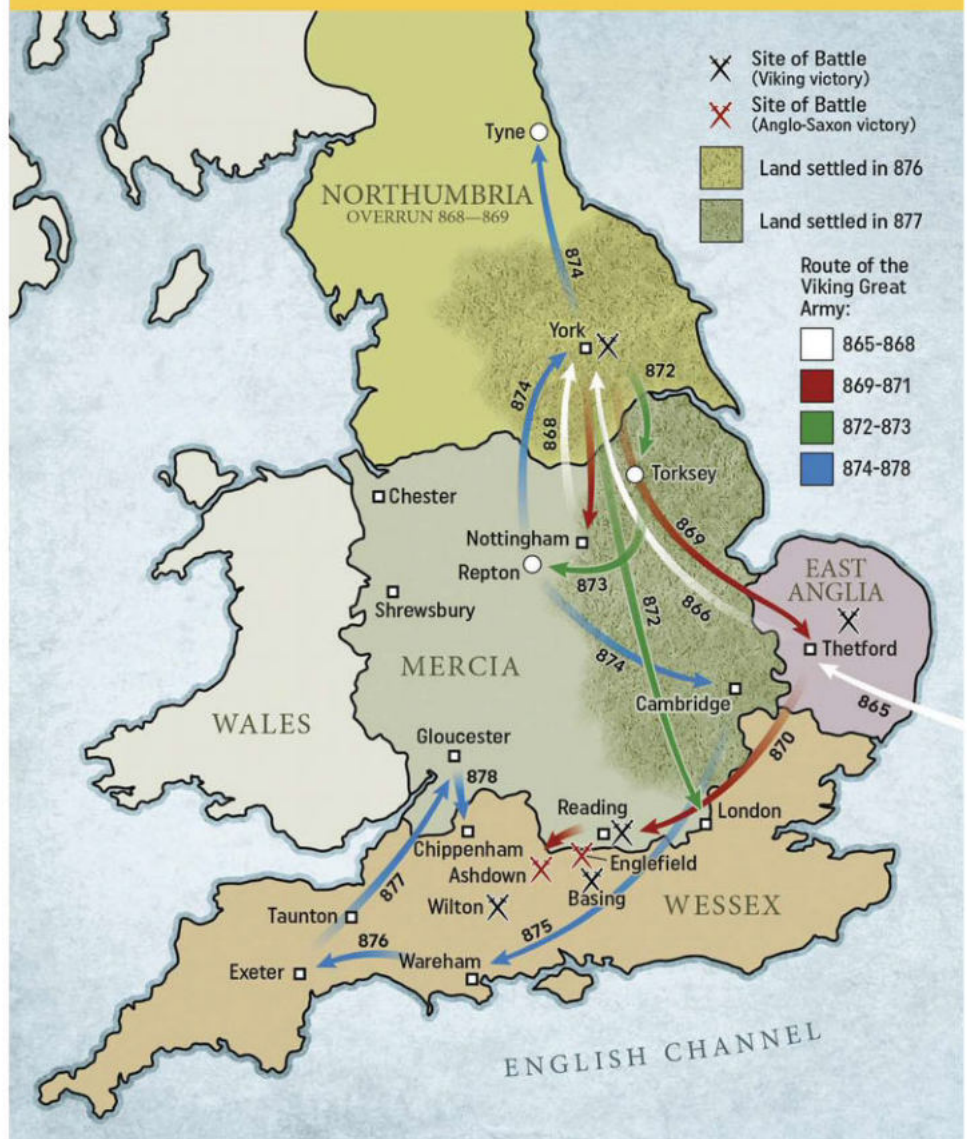
The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says little of this period beyond recording where the army took *winterstetl*. Yet there can be little doubt that this was a crucial decade for English history. It witnessed the transformation of the Great Army from raiders to settlers, hastening the demise of the separate kingdoms of Mercia, East Anglia and Northumbria. In 876, one Viking force “shared out the land of the Northumbrians, and they proceeded to plough and support themselves”.

Hunger, cold and fear

The remainder of the Great Army, led by Guthrum, continued its campaigns, dividing out Mercia, and seizing the West Saxon royal estate at Chippenham in 877. Then it was suddenly stopped in its tracks by King Alfred of Wessex. Alfred had initially retreated into the marshes of Somerset to avoid capture but it wasn't long before he was launching a counterattack: constructing a fortress at Athelney, rallying the men of Wessex to arms,

TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION

Our map shows how the Viking Great Army traversed England from AD 865–78



and in 878 defeating the Vikings at Edington in Wiltshire. Alfred's biographer, Asser, records that: “After 14 days the Vikings, thoroughly terrified by hunger, cold and fear, and in the end by despair, sought peace.”

As part of the ensuing negotiations Guthrum accepted Christianity, and “three weeks later Guthrum... with 30 of the best men from his army, came to King Alfred... and Alfred raised him from the holy font of baptism, receiving him as his adoptive son”. In 880 Guthrum's army went to East Anglia “and settled there and shared out the land”.

Soon after, Guthrum and Alfred formally divided out their areas of jurisdiction, and made arrangements for relations between their followers over legal disputes, trade and the movement of people. Guthrum minted

coins in his realm, some of which were copies of those of King Alfred, while on others he used his baptismal English name of Æthelstan. These initiatives were part of the process by which Guthrum became a Christian king in England.

Of the Great Army that precipitated these changes, we know little. Although we are given the names of the places where they over-wintered, the camps themselves remained elusive – until, that is, the archaeological work described in this article.

On the European mainland, Viking armies are known to have based themselves on islands in major rivers. A late ninth-century account by Abbot Adrevaldus of Flavigny Abbey in France of a Viking army on an island in the Loire hints at the advantages that

OVERWHELMING FORCE

The Viking Great Army's winter camps were among the largest settlements in England, as Julian D Richards and Dawn Hadley discovered when they investigated a site at Torksey

The theory that the Viking Great Army was small – its size exaggerated by Anglo-Saxon scribes for propaganda purposes – has been well and truly exploded by the discovery of a Norse winter camp at Torksey.

Our investigations of the site nine miles north-west of Lincoln – occupied by the Viking army over the winter of AD 872–73 – have recovered a wealth of plunder. This includes 26 ingots of silver and gold, as well as 60 pieces of broken-up silver jewellery, known as hacksilver. The Torksey investigations also uncovered fragments of broken-up Anglo-Saxon jewellery, ready to be melted down for recasting. The Vikings were trading, as well as processing their plunder.

The site contained more than 120 fragments of Arabic silver coins, or *dirhams* (the largest collection of its kind in the British Isles), which arrived here from the Middle East, via Scandinavia.

There are over 350 weights, as well as Anglo-Saxon silver and copper coins. It is the English and Arabic coins that enable us

to date the camp so precisely to 872–73.

The Vikings, who did not use coinage in Scandinavia, operated a dual economy in England: sometimes they paid in money; at other times, by weight of silver. They were also forging coins on the camp, as well as making jewellery.

Other objects found at Torksey include needles and tools – as the army repaired its ships, weapons and clothes – and gaming pieces. No doubt wives and mistresses inhabited the camp too.

But it is the extent of the camp that makes the discoveries significant. The camp would have been an island, created by the river Trent to the west, and low-lying marshes to the east. It extended over 55 hectares (more than 75 football pitches), far larger than the enclosure at the Vikings' winter camp at Repton.

The force that over-wintered at Torksey in 872–73 numbered in the thousands, not hundreds, and was larger than the population of most Anglo-Saxon towns.



This Arabic dirham, minted in the eighth century in the area of modern Iraq, was found in the Torksey winter camp



More than 350 weights were discovered at Torksey, including this one with a piece of decorative metalwork inset



The Viking winter camp at Torksey, as shown in the recent BBC One documentary *Vikings Uncovered*. Archaeological fieldwork has revealed that, over the winter of 872–73, its many residents were busy trading, repairing weapons and ships, and making jewellery

this conferred. The Vikings, we are told, “held crowds of prisoners in chains and... rested themselves after their toil so that they might be ready for warfare. From that place they undertook unexpected raids, sometimes in ships, sometimes on horseback, and they destroyed all the province.”

Other sources suggest that the Vikings were trading as well as raiding. For example, the *Annals of St Bertin* record that in 873 a Viking army besieged by Frankish forces at Angers was permitted to hold a market on an island in the Loire before departing in February. That armies were associated with trading is reinforced by the entry in the *Annals* for 876, which describes the “traders and shield-sellers” that followed the army of Charles the Bald. We also know that Viking armies were accompanied by women. A late ninth-century account by Abbo, a monk of St-Germain-des-Prés, refers to the presence of women alongside the Viking force that besieged Paris in 885 and 886. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that a few years later a Viking army “placed their women in safety in East Anglia”.

Nine-foot giant

Archaeological investigation has revealed more still about the Viking Great Army. Excavations of a mound in the vicar’s garden at Repton revealed the disarticulated remains of at least 264 people, of whom 80 per cent were robust males. They had been placed within the stone foundations of a Mercian mortuary chapel, and covered with a stone cairn. The deposit had been disturbed in the 17th century, when most of the stone walls were robbed, and Thomas Walker, a labourer, described to Simon Degge of Derby how the bones had originally been laid out around a central stone coffin, in which the remains of a “nine-foot giant” had been discovered. Exaggeration aside, this has been suggested as the grave of another Viking leader, surrounded by the mass grave of bodies reinterred from the battlefield.

It is also important to consider the landscape around the camp at Repton. Some 2.5 miles to the south-east, and overlying the flood plain of the Trent, archaeology has revealed the only known Viking cremation cemetery in the British Isles – in Heath Wood. Here, there are over 60 burial mounds in four groups, perhaps reflecting different warbands, and a different burial strategy. Excavation has revealed that some of the mounds were erected directly over cremation pyres. The hearths had been swept clean, but fragments of swords and shields remained, as well as the cremated bones of sacrificed horses and dogs, required for hunting in Valhalla.

The graves contained women and children as well as men. But, unlike the warrior in



Women and children flee as Vikings launch an attack, in a medieval illustration

The Viking Great Army transformed England, hastening the demise of Mercia, East Anglia and Northumbria

Grave 511, who may have been hedging his bets by being buried adjacent to the location of saintly relics and holy pilgrimage, these Vikings seem to have had no such reservations about their faith.

The kingdoms’ demise

The term ‘Great Army’ suggests that the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were being assailed by one massive, unified force. However, documentary and archaeological evidence reveals that the army comprised multiple warbands drawn from different parts of Scandinavia. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle’s account of the Vikings’ battles with West Saxon forces in 871 records that the army was led by at least two kings – Halfdan and Bagsecg – and many *jarls* (chiefs), and it was reinforced later in this year by a “great summer army”. The contrasting burial strategies adopted at Repton and Heath Wood may reflect different factions within the Great Army, which divided into two after spending the winter at Repton.

While Guthrum continued to battle against Alfred in Wessex, Halfdan took part of the army to Northumbria and proceeded to settle. This process is witnessed archaeologically by another excavation at Cottam, in East Yorkshire. Here, an Anglo-Saxon farmstead was abandoned before being replaced, in the late ninth century, by what we now describe as an Anglo-Scandinavian farmstead, its occupants adopting a new hybrid cultural identity revealed by, among other things, the style of their jewellery.

This farmstead is just one example of the many ways in which the Viking Great Army transformed England. As well as changes in land ownership, its arrival precipitated the demise of the distinct English kingdoms and the emergence of Wessex, under Alfred, as a united Anglo-Saxon kingdom. It also witnessed the establishment and growth of towns, initially as defended *burhs* (fortified settlements) against the Vikings, many of which grew into major trading and manufacturing centres.

In the wake of the Great Army, the Anglo-Saxons established a town at Torksey in modern-day Lincolnshire. Torksey was home to a mint and at least four churches, yet it would earn its fame as the centre of a major pottery industry. This settlement near the banks of the Trent became one of the engine rooms of what has been described as England’s first industrial revolution. And, as the wheel-thrown and industrial-scale kiln technologies that were employed here were unknown in Anglo-Saxon England, they can only have been imported by continental potters travelling in the ‘baggage train’ of the Great Army. In other words, without the Great Army, that first industrial revolution may have looked very different indeed.

After 865, England would never be the same. The Vikings were here to stay, and left their legacy on all aspects of English life. **H**

Julian D Richards is professor of archaeology at the University of York. **Dawn Hadley** is professor of medieval archaeology at the University of Sheffield. Together they are co-directing the Viking Torksey project

DISCOVER MORE

BOOKS

- **The Vikings: A Very Short Introduction** by Julian D Richards (OUP, 2005)
- **Everyday Life in Viking-Age Towns** by Dawn Hadley (Oxbow, 2013)

TELEVISION

- The second season of **The Last Kingdom** – the adaptation of Bernard Cornwell’s *The Saxon Stories* – is due to air soon on BBC Two



England's northe



Melvyn Bragg, presenter of a new BBC Radio 4 series on the history of the north of England, talks to Rob Attar about how this region has forged a distinct identity over the past 2,000 years

Accompanies the BBC Radio 4 series *The Matter of the North*



What do we mean when we speak of 'the North'?

This is open to dispute, but I think we've made a fair shot of it in the series. The map we've drawn starts in the far north across Hadrian's Wall, from west to east, and then we go from Wallsend down the North Sea to the Humber and Hull. We trundle across country, including Sheffield, and get to just below Liverpool before going up the west coast back to the wall.

So it's that chunk and it contains a mass of northern landscape. It contains the place where the Romans made the most intensive military settlement. It contains the place where the Vikings arrived. It contains the place where the industrial revolution – in my view the greatest ever revolution – took place. And it contains the place where the idea of nature began to replace the notion of reason.

This entity we've made has got twice the population of Scotland. If it were an independent country, it would have the eighth biggest economy in Europe, and it's probably as inventive as any similar area in the world.

When did the North first develop its own identity?

Well the North actually began the English



The North began the English identity. After the Romans, after 200 years of warring tribes, came Northumbria, the first kingdom of the new England

identity. We were there in the beginning. After the Romans left in the early fifth century, there was a period of around 200 years of warring tribes in the North. The whole thing broke down, but what came out of it eventually was the kingdom of Northumbria, around the North East. That was the first kingdom of the new England. It conquered or had alliances with virtually every other section of England, right down to Wessex.

Northumbria had some important things going for it. First of all, it had very good soldiers. Secondly, it had the cultural backing with works such as the Lindisfarne Gospels and Bede's history of the English people. There was also the infusion of religion, in a powerful way. Augustine had brought Christianity to the south of England, but in the North, it came through what we used to call the Celtic religion. You can see evidence of it in some of the great crosses, such as the Ruthwell Cross and Gosforth cross.

This was one entity reaching out to the whole of that part of the islands – and that was further reinforced centuries afterwards by the arrival of the Vikings. Yes they did go to other places, but mostly it was to Cumbria and Yorkshire, and in great numbers. Firstly

m soul



they came to loot, but later they came with their wives to settle and brought an immense amount of place names, family names and different ways of farming. At stage after stage, you find the North having a separate history.

What has the attitude of the South traditionally been to the North?

They have tried to control it from the beginning – at least since 1066. William the Conqueror, who was an absolute sod, thought the North was very dangerous because the Scandinavians kept coming and so he adopted a scorched earth policy. If you went there for many decades, even centuries, afterwards, there would be very few big settlements except fortresses. So the north-south divide began very early and this is typified again when Catholicism was outlawed, as it were, by Henry VIII. It was in the North that you had the Pilgrimage of Grace rebellion against the South.

You have to remember the North was a very long way from the South in those days, so it was developing its own dialects, language, settlements and a persisting religion that had largely been stamped out in the South. Even Chaucer, in the 14th century, wrote that southern people could not understand those from the North because of the different words they used.

Because of its distance from central government, has it been easier for people in the North to rebel?

I don't know whether it's been easier, because people have also rebelled in the south of this country – as we know from the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 for example. But there has been a steady sense in English affairs for a very long time that the North was a problem and that it was set apart.

That became much less so when the industrial revolution arrived and the North

“

The North was the centre of Britain and, for decades, it was this region that was producing the wealth and setting the pace of the country

became a cash cow, a wonderful place for people in this country to make enormous amounts of money. The North was the centre of Britain and, for decades, it was this region that was producing the wealth and setting the pace of the country. All of a sudden, this small island had 35 per cent of the world's trade, was the world leader in producing all kinds of things and was building railways in America, China and India.

At a similar time, one other thing the North gave to the world, and not just the South, was the idea of the importance of nature. When Daniel Defoe, a great Londoner, came up to the North he described it as a place of horror where nobody wanted

The Ruthwell Cross (left) and the writings of Bede (above), are two of Northumbria's great achievements, says Melvyn Bragg

to live. Yet not very long afterwards, Wordsworth was saying that this was a place to inspire the finest feelings and thoughts. Out of that came the idea of taking on nature through walking in beautiful places, climbing hills and that sort of thing. So this was a massive change in intellectual and emotional attitudes to nature and the way people lived their everyday lives.

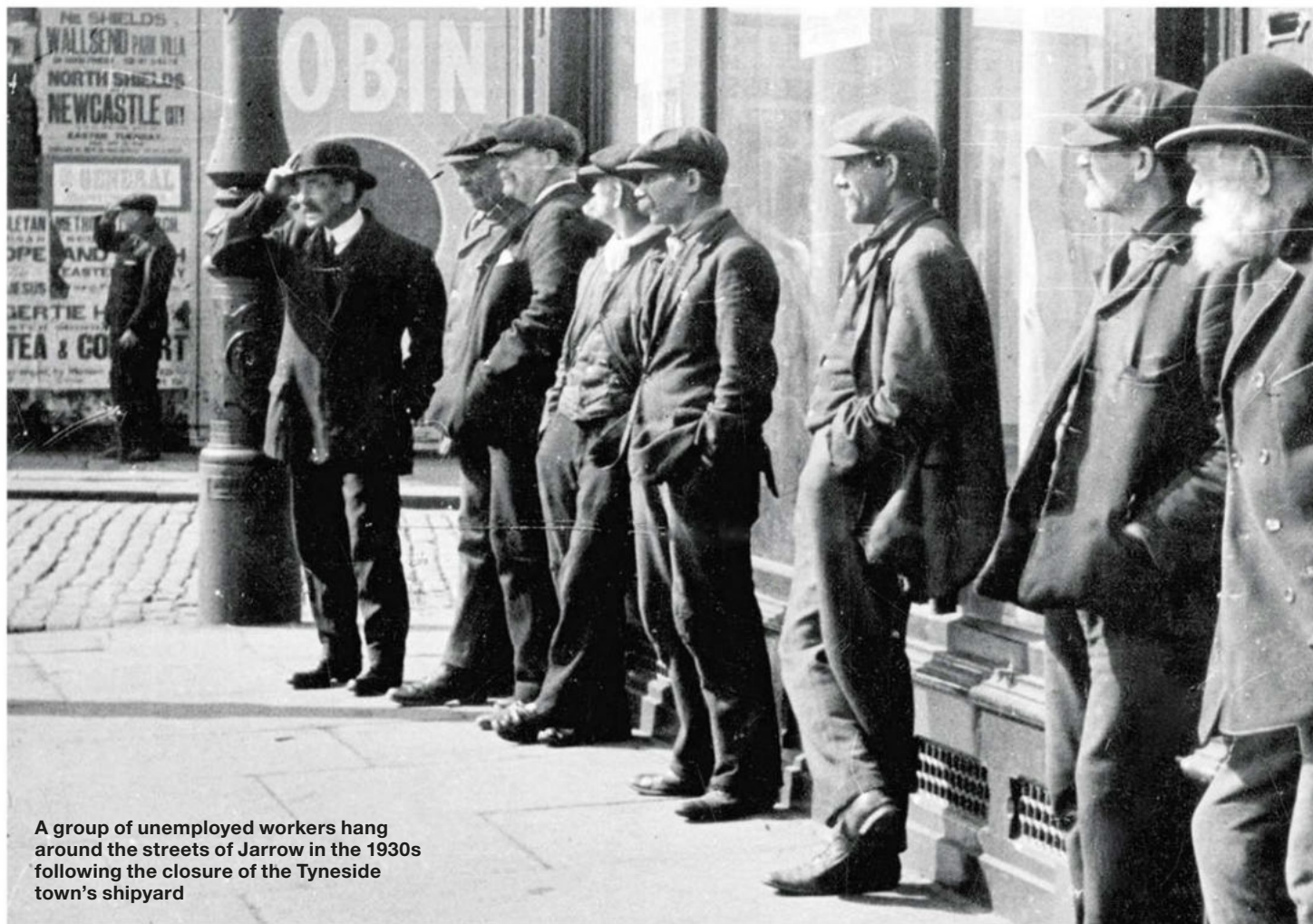
Do you think the North has a different relationship with Scotland than the rest of England has?

Yes and it's been largely antagonistic – although not always. The Scots have been a threat to the North and so they had to guard against them, not only with the wall but also with castles. The North has had to define itself against both Scotland and the South.

Yet it's interestingly muddled, because in the border areas of the country there are the same families on both sides of the wall. People's land goes either side of the wall and their herds of cows and flocks of sheep do likewise. So, not only have the borders been heavily disputed territory, but they've also been a little entity of their own.

You've talked about some of the times when the North set itself apart from the South. But were there also periods of co-operation?

There were, especially during warfare and particularly the world wars. Even before that, people would come down from the North to join the armies that were going to France, because, apart from anything else, it was lucrative. And of course the aristocracy of the North owed allegiance to the king – and part



A group of unemployed workers hang around the streets of Jarrow in the 1930s following the closure of the Tyneside town's shipyard

of that involved coming down to bring knights, archers and soldiers.

In more recent times, what have de-industrialisation and economic decline in parts of the North meant for its relationship with the South?

I think many people in the North feel very strongly that they're always getting sold short. For instance, tens of millions of pounds could be spent on a garden bridge in London, whereas wonderful museums in the North, such as Bede's World, may get completely cut. The North has enhanced problems that the South doesn't have, and that's basically because of a lack of investment and caretaking.

During the industrial revolution, the North did have great resources and it did great things. It created amazing cities such as Manchester and Liverpool, the latter of which still has more public monuments than any other British city, including London. But when the resources go, everything declines.

What hopes do you have for the future of the North?

If there were reasonable investment, the North could do very well. It has done very well in certain areas when it was given a



The North gave us the idea of the importance of nature – Wordsworth said this was a place to inspire the finest thoughts

chance. But things are let go – the big steel industry for example. Newcastle was at one stage the only place in the world where you could build a complete ship, with washbasins, beds and sheets and so on. There were 150 different types of carpenters employed on it. But we lost all that.

How important has being northern been for your own identity?

It's difficult to talk about your own identity because it is often something other people tell you about. But I was very aware of the vastness of the North and I think that sort of thing has had an influence on me. I was also aware of the way people spoke in the North being different and – I know this is a cliché – but when I go north the people *are* more friendly. And there is definitely a feeling of a different history and of different expectations. **H**

Cumbrian-born **Melvyn Bragg** is one of the country's best-known writers and broadcasters. He is the longstanding presenter of *The South Bank Show* and BBC Radio 4's *In Our Time*

DISCOVER MORE

RADIO

► **Melvyn Bragg's** series *The Matter of the North* is due to begin on BBC Radio 4 on 29 August



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Death car

The shell of Reinhard Heydrich's Mercedes where it was ambushed by two assassins. Heydrich would die an agonising death a few days later from blood poisoning after fragments of shrapnel and horsehair from the car's upholstery became lodged in his spleen

Reinhard Heydrich is widely recognised as one of the great iconic villains of the 20th century, an appalling figure even within the context of the Nazi elite. Curiously enough, however, his international 'fame' rose considerably as a result of his 1942 assassination which quickly became the subject of countless movies and books, starting with Fritz Lang's Hollywood production *Hangmen Also Die!* (1943) and Heinrich Mann's novel *Lidice* (1942). And it is the inspiration behind two films due to be released soon.

The continuing interest in Operation Anthropoid is understandable. Arguably the most spectacular secret service operation of the entire Second World War, the assassination on 27 May 1942 ended the life of Nazi Germany's chief organiser of terror at home and in the occupied territories. It was the only successful attempt on the life of a senior Nazi during the war.

Secret plans to assassinate Heydrich had emerged in London more than half a year earlier, in late September 1941. The origins of the plan have remained highly controversial to this day and have given rise to all sorts of

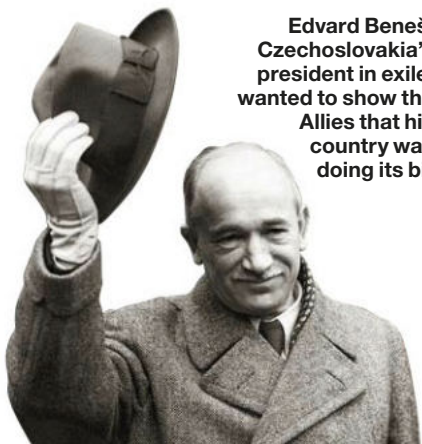
conspiracy theories, largely because the parties involved – the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and the Czechoslovak government-in-exile under President Edvard Beneš – officially denied all responsibility after 1945. Neither of them wanted to be accused of condoning political assassination as a means of warfare, particularly since it had always been clear that the Germans would respond to the killing of a prominent Nazi leader with the most brutal reprisals against the civilian population.

Desperate measures

The surviving documents on the assassination reveal that the plan to kill Heydrich was primarily born out of desperation: ever since the fall of France in the summer of 1940, and the inglorious British retreat from Dunkirk, London was hard-pressed to regain the military initiative.

Without any chance of being able to defeat the German army by themselves, Churchill, the War Office, and the Special Operations Executive hoped to incite popular unrest in the Nazi occupied territories, thereby deflecting vital German military resources to a number of trouble spots. They quickly found an ally in Beneš, for whom the ultimate

Edvard Beneš, Czechoslovakia's president in exile, wanted to show the Allies that his country was doing its bit



Killing Hitler's hangman

In May 1942, two partisans assassinated the reviled Nazi grandee Reinhard Heydrich. For the beleaguered Allies, Heydrich's death was a major coup. But, says **Robert Gerwarth**, the consequences for countless civilians across occupied Europe were catastrophic



objective was the postwar re-emergence of an independent Czechoslovak state. To gain support for this objective in London, he needed a spectacular act of resistance designed to demonstrate that the Czechs were doing their bit for an Allied victory. The purpose of Heydrich's assassination was to achieve this objective.

The men selected to assassinate Heydrich were well prepared for their mission. Jan Kubiš, a 27-year-old former NCO (Non-commissioned officer) from Moravia, had gained his first experiences in resistance activities in the spring of 1939. When the Gestapo tried to arrest him, he managed to escape to Poland where he met the second future Heydrich assassin, Josef Gabčík. A former locksmith from Slovakia, Gabčík had served as an NCO in the former Czech army before fleeing the country in despair over the Nazi occupation. A third man, Josef Valčík, was to act as lookout for the approaching car on 27 May 1942, the day of the ambush, at a hairpin bend in central Prague. At around 10.20 that morning, Valčík's shaving mirror flashed in the sun, signalling that Heydrich's open-top car was approaching.

As the assassins had anticipated, Heydrich was driving without a security escort. When

the car slowly turned around the corner, Gabčík jumped out, aiming his machine-gun at Heydrich and pulling the trigger, but the gun, previously dismantled and concealed in his briefcase under a layer of grass, jammed.

Heydrich, assuming that there was only one assassin, hastily ordered his driver to stop the car and drew his pistol, determined to shoot Gabčík – a fatal error of judgment that would cost his life. As the car braked sharply, Kubiš stepped out of the shadows and tossed one of his hand-grenades towards the open Mercedes. He misjudged the distance and the bomb exploded against the car's rear wheel, throwing shrapnel back into Kubiš's face and shattering the windows of a passing tram. As the noise of the explosion died away, Heydrich and his driver leaped from the wrecked car with drawn pistols ready to kill the assassins.

While Kubiš managed to quickly grab his bicycle and cycle away, Gabčík found escape less easy. As Heydrich came towards him through the dust of the explosion, he took cover behind a telegraph pole, fully expecting Heydrich to shoot him. Suddenly, however, Heydrich collapsed in pain. Gabčík seized the opportunity and fled.

As soon as the assassins had vanished, Czech and German passers-by came to

As acting Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, Reinhard Heydrich's brutality was shocking, even by Nazi standards

Heydrich's death marked the only successful attempt on the life of a senior Nazi during the Second World War

Heydrich: The life of Hitler's killer-in-chief

Born in 1904 in the city of Halle, Reinhard Heydrich came from a middle-class background of professional musicians. His father was a successful composer, while his maternal grandfather was the director of the world-famous Royal Dresden Conservatory. Although young Heydrich displayed great talent in music, he decided to join Germany's small navy as an officer cadet after the First World War, mainly because running a conservatory became unsustainable in the economically troubled Weimar Republic.

In 1931, Heydrich was discharged from the navy after a scandal revolving around him being simultaneously engaged to two women. Up until that point, he had shown little interest in politics. It was his future wife, Lina von Osten, who introduced him to the ideology of Nazism and encouraged him to apply for a vacancy as an intelligence officer in the SS.

Himmler took an immediate shine to Heydrich and together they rose rapidly after Hitler had come to power in 1933. By the time of his death in June 1942, Heydrich had accumulated three key positions.

As head of the Nazis' vast political and criminal police apparatus, Heydrich commanded a sizeable shadow army of Gestapo and SD officers directly responsible for Nazi terror at home and in the occupied territories. As such, he was also the main organiser of the SS mobile killing squads, the *Einsatzgruppen*.

Then, in September 1941, Hitler appointed Heydrich acting Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, a position that made him the undisputed ruler of the former Czech lands. The eight months of his rule in Prague and the aftermath of his assassination are still remembered as the darkest time in modern Czech history.

In 1941, Heydrich was instructed by Hitler via Hermann Göring to find and implement a 'Total Solution of the Jewish Question' in Europe. In that capacity, he chaired the Wannsee conference of January 1942. By the time of his death, the Nazis had moved to the indiscriminate and systematic murder of the Jews of Europe.



Heydrich's aid and halted a baker's van that transported the injured Heydrich to the nearby Bulovka hospital, where doctors quickly delivered a diagnosis: his diaphragm was ruptured, and fragments of shrapnel and horsehair from the car's upholstery were lodged in his spleen.

A few days after the initially successful surgery, an infection in the stomach cavity set in. Had penicillin been available at that point, Heydrich would have survived. Without it, Heydrich's fever got worse. The doctors were unable to combat his septicemia, his temperature soared and he was in agonising pain. On 4 June, at 9am, Heydrich succumbed to blood poisoning. 'Hitler's Hangman', as the exiled German Nobel Laureate Thomas Mann famously called Heydrich in his BBC commentary the following day, was dead.

Murderous atmosphere

On 9 June 1942, the body of Heydrich was laid to rest in one of the most elaborate state funerals ever held in the Third Reich. Over the previous two days, his coffin had been exhibited in the courtyard of Prague Castle, where tens of thousands of ethnic German and Czech civilians – some voluntarily, some 'encouraged' by the Nazi authorities – filed past to pay their final respects. The coffin was then transported to the New Reich Chancellery in Berlin, where, to the tunes of the Funeral March from Richard Wagner's *Twilight of the Gods*, the entire leadership of the Third Reich bid a final farewell to the slain Reich Protector. Himmler and Hitler offered the eulogies.

While Heydrich's body was being laid to rest in Berlin, the Nazi leadership sought revenge for what Goebbels described in his diary as the "irreplaceable" loss of "the most radical and most successful persecutor of all enemies of the state". The atmosphere in Berlin can only be described as murderous. "Nothing can prevent me from deporting millions of Czechs if they do not wish for peaceful co-existence," an outraged Hitler screamed at Czech president Emil Hácha after the funeral. The assassins had to be found immediately or the Czech population would face unprecedented consequences. Hitler also ordered an immediate act of retaliation: the complete annihilation of the Bohemian village of Lidice.

Lidice, a small village with around 500 inhabitants located north-west of Prague, had first aroused the suspicion of the Gestapo in late autumn 1941, when a captured Czech parachutist testified that two families living in

Only nine of the children of Lidice were deemed 'Germanisable' and assigned to foster parents. Most were murdered

Lidice, the Horáks and Stříbrnýs, served as contact points for resistance fighters air-dropped into the protectorate. The story was probably made up, but the Gestapo chose to believe it and declared the village a legitimate target for retaliation. On the day of Heydrich's funeral, German police units surrounded the village. Male inhabitants were herded onto the farm of the Horák family where they were shot in groups of 10. All in all, 172 men between the ages of 14 and 84 were murdered in Lidice. The shootings were still under way when the first houses were set on fire. By 10 in the morning, every house in Lidice had been burnt down and their ruins blown up with explosives or bulldozed to the ground.

The women of Lidice were deported to Ravensbrück concentration camp while their children underwent racial screening. Only nine of the children of Lidice were deemed 'Germanisable' and given new German names before being assigned to German foster parents. Most of the children were murdered.

While the destruction of Lidice fulfilled Hitler's immediate appetite for revenge, the Gestapo initially failed to apprehend Heydrich's assassins. Instead, the authorities announced that drastic measures against the Czech population would be taken if the assassins were not apprehended by 18 June. As the date approached, rumours spread that the Nazis would execute every 10th non-German in the protectorate, and many Czechs, either out of fear for their lives or in exchange for money, offered information to the Germans. None of it, however, delivered a real lead on the assassins.

Then, on 16 June, two days before the deadline, Karel Čurda, a parachutist air-dropped into the protectorate in late March 1942, walked into the Gestapo headquarters in Prague's Peček Palace – not a place many Czechs entered voluntarily. To save his life and protect his family, Čurda was willing to sacrifice those of others. He did not know Gabčík and Kubiš's current location, but he did betray those who had provided safe houses, including that of the Moravec family in Prague, which had sheltered Heydrich's assassins for a number of weeks.

A wave of arrests followed. In the early hours of 17 June, the Moravec apartment



Nazis in mourning

Heinrich Himmler offers a eulogy to Heydrich at his funeral on 9 June 1942. The thirst for revenge in Berlin was now insatiable, and thousands of Czech civilians would soon pay the price

was raided. The mother of the family, Marie Moravec, killed herself with a cyanide capsule when the Gestapo agents arrived. Her husband, Alois Moravec, oblivious to his family's involvement with the resistance, was taken to the cellars of Peček Palace alongside his teenage son, Vlastimil. After withstanding hours of torture, Vlastimil cracked when the interrogators showed him his mother's severed head in a fish tank and threatened to place his father's beside it. Vlastimil told the Gestapo that the assassins had taken shelter in the Orthodox Church of St Cyril and Methodius in central Prague.

Assassins' last stand

The following morning, 800 SS men surrounded the Orthodox church. Their orders were to take the prisoners alive, allowing for further interrogations regarding their aides in the protectorate. The unsuspecting Kubiš and two fellow parachutists had the night watch as the Germans burst into the church. From the choir stalls the parachutists opened fire and managed to keep the attackers at bay for nearly two hours. By 7am, the first Czech was dead; the other two, including Kubiš, were seriously wounded and captured. Kubiš was carried out of the church alive and brought to the SS military hospital, but died there without ever regaining consciousness.

The Gestapo searched the building more thoroughly and found a trapdoor to the catacombs. Under pressure, the resident priest admitted that four more parachutists – including Heydrich's second assassin, Gabčík – were hiding there. He and Čurda tried to persuade the men to surrender, but they refused. Over the following four hours, the SS pumped tear gas and water into the catacombs to force the parachutists out. When the SS finally used explosives to enlarge the narrow entrance, the four parachutists shot themselves in the heads.

The death of Heydrich's assassins was greeted with joy in Berlin, but the reprisals



Horrific reprisals

The aftermath of the massacre at the Czech village of Lidice – carried out in revenge for Heydrich's death. German police units shot 172 men, aged between 14 and 84

Death of innocents

The Children's War Victims Monument at Lidice. This is now recognised as a memorial to all child victims of war





The hangman's killer

Czech paratrooper Jan Kubiš, one half of the two-man team that ambushed Heydrich's car. It was his hand-grenade that dealt the Nazi leader his fatal injuries



Strike partner

Kubiš's fellow assassin, the Slovak former locksmith Josef Gabčík. Kubiš and Gabčík died when SS troops stormed their hideout at St Cyril and Methodius church in central Prague

Following Heydrich's death, Himmler stepped up the campaign to exterminate the Jews. 1942 would be the Holocaust's most murderous year

continued. Over the next few weeks, 236 other supporters and providers of safe houses for the parachutists were taken to Mauthausen concentration camp and murdered. The terrifying memory of the *Heydrichiáda*, as the wave of terror that followed the assassination was soon to be known, served as a powerful deterrent to any further resistance activities. Through his death, Heydrich had inadvertently fulfilled one of his ambitions: the complete and lasting 'pacification' of the protectorate.

If Heydrich's assassination triggered an unprecedented wave of retaliation against the Czech population, it also prompted the Nazi leadership in Berlin to a further radicalisation of their policies towards the Jews. As Himmler emphasised in a secret speech to senior SS officers in Berlin immediately after Heydrich's funeral: "It is our sacred obligation to avenge his death, to take over his mission, and to destroy without mercy and weakness, now more than ever, the enemies of our people." Himmler also made it very clear that the programme of mass extermination was to be completed as soon as possible: "The migration of the Jewish people will be completed within a year. Then no more of them will be migrating."

Himmler kept his word, and 1942 was to become the most murderous year of the Holocaust as the Nazis killed the majority of Jews herded into the 'General Government' district of German-occupied Poland. In 'honour' of Heydrich, the extermination programme in the General Government was given the operational name 'Aktion Reinhard'. When it tailed off in the autumn of 1943, some 2 million people – the vast majority of them Jews – had been murdered. **II**

Robert Gerwarth is director of the Centre for War Studies at University College Dublin. His books include *Hitler's Hangman: The Life of Heydrich* (Yale, 2012)

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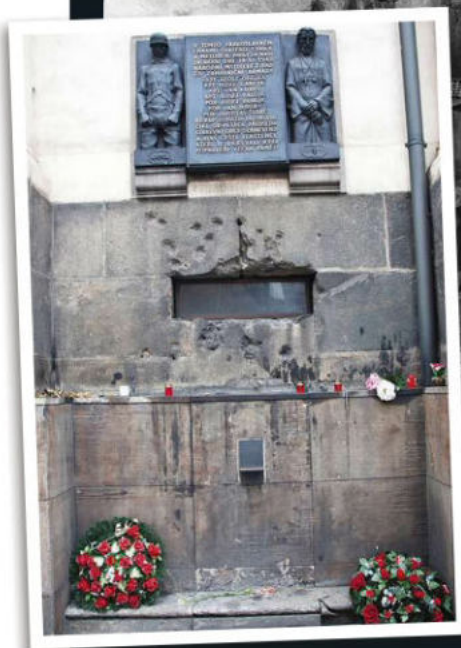
FILMS

► **Anthropoid** and **HHhH**, two films telling the story of the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, are both due for release soon



Assassins' hideout

ABOVE: The crypt at St Cyril and St Methodius church, scene of Kubiš and Gabčík's final stand against 800 SS troops. The pair hid here until they were betrayed by Czech paratrooper Karel Čurda. LEFT: The memorial plaque to Kubiš and Gabčík above the crypt at the church. Note the bullet holes that riddle the window



THE **HISTORY** ESSAY



Anti-EEC demonstrators out in force prior to the British Common Market Referendum vote, which was held on 5 June 1975. With Britain's postwar economic boom a distant memory, the electorate chose to stay in the community

THE RELUCTANT EUROPEANS

Britain's decision to join the EEC in 1973 was motivated not by idealism but a grim assessment of the country's economic future

By Robert Tombs

Britain's vote on 23 June to leave the European Union casts the history of its membership in a new light. Explaining why Britain joined the then European Economic Community in 1973, after several attempts and long negotiations, is a first step to understanding its ambivalent 43-year relationship with

European integration. It was shortly after the Second World War that British engagement with the task of rebuilding a shattered Europe began. The Labour foreign secretary Ernest Bevin had continental, indeed global, ambitions: a "Western Union", centred on Franco-British partnership, eventually taking in the Benelux countries, Scandinavia and a democratic Germany, and building links with British, French and Belgian colonies and the Commonwealth. This, he believed, would create a 'Third Force' equal with the United States and the Soviet Union. He hoped in four or five years to have the Americans "eating out of our hands".

The first step was the Treaty of Dunkirk (1947) with France, followed by the Treaty of Brussels (1948) bringing in the Benelux countries. The treaty aimed at 'harmonisation' in economic matters, and common social and cultural policies. But this strategy was derailed by the beginning of the Cold War, which made western Europe more dependent for its security on the United States. The Americans threw their weight behind a far less grandiose vision – the 1950 Schuman Plan – drafted secretly by the French businessman and political *éminence grise* Jean Monnet, and put forward by the French foreign minister Robert Schuman.

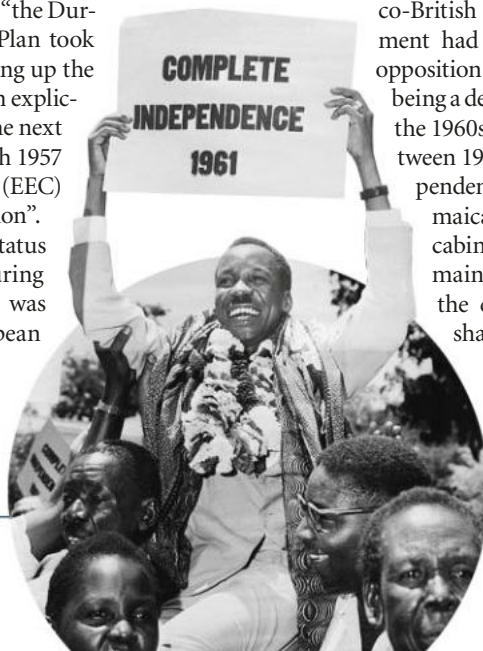
Schuman proposed a "high authority" of non-elected experts to manage western Europe's coal and steel industries. The immediate aim of the French government was to control German heavy industry to prevent a possible military resurgence. With American backing, the plan was presented to Britain in May 1950 as a fait accompli, which it was given 48 hours to agree in principle to join. Bevin, affronted at what seemed a Franco-American plot, refused to buy "a pig in a poke". The deputy prime minister Herbert Morrison famously commented that "the Durham miners won't wear it". The Schuman Plan took shape in the Treaty of Paris (April 1951) setting up the European Coal and Steel Community with an explicit commitment to eventual political unity. The next step, the Treaty of Rome, was signed in March 1957 creating a European Economic Community (EEC) of six members committed to "ever closer union".

Britain tried at first to negotiate associate status with the EEC. Its position was difficult. During the 19th century, though much of its trade was with the empire and the Americas, the European

continent had been a major export market. But the Great Depression and the Second World War had shifted much of Britain's trade to the Dominions and colonies, from which it imported food and exported manufactured goods. In the 1950s, Europe took only 10 per cent of British exports (compared with 46 per cent today) – about the same as Australia. As John Maynard Keynes put it: "What suits our exporters is to have the whole world as their playground." The Treaty of Rome – which set up a tariff wall, a protectionist agricultural policy, and a goal of progressive integration – seemed to challenge Britain's great-power prestige and its trade.

The response of the Conservative government, elected in 1951, was to propose a Free Trade Area open to all, within which the Six could pursue economic and political integration, while permitting other European and Commonwealth countries to trade with them. This would arguably have been more favourable to Third World economic development and to long-term European growth. Ludwig Erhard, the West German finance minister and architect of its 'economic miracle', was a strong supporter. But, in November 1958, the negotiations were vetoed by the new French president General Charles de Gaulle. In response, Britain successfully proposed a European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1959, with Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland. Over time, EFTA and the EEC would doubtless have created stable trading arrangements and systems of co-operation.

However, in the 1960s, the British government made a historic decision to change policy. EFTA was considered too small to provide the diplomatic clout craved by Whitehall at a time of severe post-imperial unease, aggravated by the 1956 Suez fiasco in which a Franco-British attempt to overthrow the Egyptian government had been humiliatingly thwarted by American opposition (for more on this, turn to page 65). As well as being a decade of vertiginous cultural and social change, the 1960s were years of accelerating decolonisation: between 1960 and 1966, 20 British colonies became independent, including Cyprus, Nigeria, Tanganyika, Jamaica, Uganda, Kenya, Malta and Singapore. A cabinet committee warned in 1960: "If we try to remain aloof from [the EEC] ... simultaneously with the contraction of our overseas possessions, we shall run the risk of losing any real claim to be a



Tanganyika, led by its chief minister Julius Nyerere (shown left), became one of a number of colonies to win their independence from Britain in the 1960s

GETTY IMAGES

In the early postwar period, British trade boomed while a devastated continent struggled to recover. But, from the 1950s onwards, Britain seemed to be lagging behind



Two women camping with their Messerschmitt Roadster at a lake in Bavaria in 1959. By this point, countries such as Germany, France and Italy were benefiting from 'windfall growth' as their agricultural work force shifted into more productive industrial employment

world power." Besides, Washington disliked EFTA as a barrier to its aim of a united Europe, and the Americans put heavy pressure on London to join the EEC. As the former American secretary of state, Dean Acheson (one of the original backers of the Schuman Plan) put it in December 1962: "Great Britain has lost an empire, and has not yet found a role. The attempt to play a separate power role... apart from Europe... based on a 'Special Relationship' with the United States (or) being head of a 'Commonwealth'... this role is about played out."

These words had a strong impact on British policy makers and the public. (But with hindsight, we might observe that rather than disappearing from the international scene, Britain has remained one of the world's half-dozen or so most powerful and internationally active states – as it has been for the last three centuries.) Alongside diplomatic ambitions were economic worries. In the early postwar period, British trade had boomed, while a devastated continent struggled to recover. In steel, nuclear power, jet aircraft and cars, Britain had been a world

leader, accounting for 50 per cent of global car exports. But from the 1950s onwards, comparative growth statistics seemed to show Britain lagging behind continental competitors. A report in 1953 warned of "relegation of the UK to the second division". Over the next 30 years there was a chorus of dismay about the 'the sick man of Europe'. This made joining the EEC seem less a choice than an inescapable necessity as the only way of galvanising Britain's economy.

This pessimism was fundamentally misconceived. It assumed that European growth-rates were permanently higher than those of a declining Britain. In reality, faster continental growth was due to one-off structural modernisation: the large agricultural workforce was shifting into more productive industrial employment. From the mid-1940s to the early 1970s, this gave France, Italy and Germany 'windfall growth' at a higher rate than was possible in Britain, which since the mid-19th century had no large agricultural sector to convert. But once that process – known in France as 'the 30 glorious years' – finished in the early 1970s, European growth rates became the same as, or even slightly lower than, Britain's. When measured over the whole half-century from 1950 to 2000, it is now clear that Britain's economic performance was no different from the European norm. Harold

THE HISTORY ESSAY

De Gaulle's successive vetoes seemed to confirm that Britain was 'the sinking *Titanic*', and Europe the lifeboat, into which it must scramble whatever the drawbacks



The student riots in Paris in 1968 hastened de Gaulle's retirement and provided an opportunity that Heath swiftly grasped

Macmillan's Conservative government applied to join the EEC in 1961. "It is only full membership, with the possibility of controlling and dominating Europe," wrote an optimistic official, "that is really attractive." For two years, negotiations to join were laboriously and stubbornly pursued, with Commonwealth exports of tinned pineapple, butter, wheat and lamb causes of interminable wrangling. Edward Heath, the Lord Privy Seal, who was leading the negotiations with tireless determination, reported that: "The French are opposing us by every means, fair and foul. They are absolutely ruthless."

After one late-night session, the Luxembourg foreign minister collapsed from exhaustion. Then, de Gaulle vetoed negotiations in a televised press conference on 14 January 1963, taking the British and indeed his own government by surprise. "England is an island," he declared, "sea-going, bound up, by its trade, its markets, its food supplies, with the most varied and often the most distant countries." Hence it was not European enough to be part of "a truly European Europe".

De Gaulle had several motives: to preserve French leadership, to exclude a country he considered to be 'a vassal' of the Americans, to forestall what he saw as the 'Anglo-Saxon' intention of absorbing the EEC into a vast Atlantic free trade zone, and to protect French economic interests, particularly agriculture.

De Gaulle's veto was the first of a series of blows in 1963 that wrecked Macmillan's government. In October 1964, Labour won a general election, and Harold Wilson, epitomising a new meritocratic elite, became prime minister. At first, like most of his party, he was suspicious of EEC membership and urged support for Commonwealth trade: "We are not entitled to sell our friends and kinsmen down the river for a problematical and marginal advantage in selling washing machines in Düs-

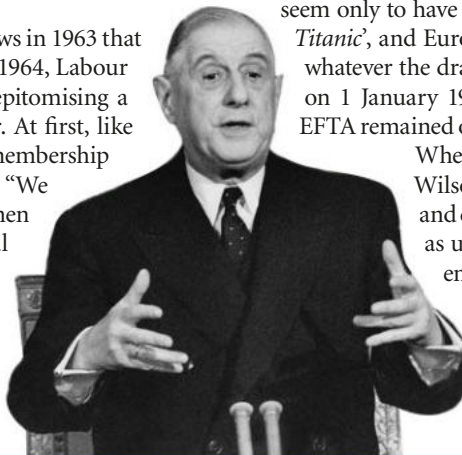
seldorf." But soon he decided to make a new application to join, hoping it could be to "the right sort of Europe... outward looking and not autarkic". As Alan Milward, the official historian of Britain's negotiations, puts it, there was a general agreement in Britain to accept something that was not on offer.

Wilson's motivation was primarily political. He hoped that Britain would regain its old international status by acting as the bridge between Europe, America and the Commonwealth. There was an extraordinary dissonance in official British thinking, a bizarre mixture of despair about national 'decline' and arrogance about their own abilities to control their future European partners. "If we can't dominate that lot," said Wilson, "there's not much to be said for us." He made a new application which de Gaulle again vetoed in 1967, using (said a Foreign Office diplomat) language of "quite exceptional bitterness, hostility and scorn". Only after the students of Nanterre and the Sorbonne had dented the general's prestige in the May 1968 riots and hastened his retirement, was the barrier to British membership of the EEC removed. De Gaulle's successor, Georges Pompidou, declared that the general, as "a legendary personage", could defy all of Europe to keep the British out, whereas he, a mere politician, could not.

Edward Heath's new Conservative government, elected in June 1970, grasped the opportunity. Heath assured Pompidou that the British were ready to "give priority to (Europe) over their other interests in the world", though he grumbled privately that the Europeans "are constantly barging ahead with regulations drawn up to suit themselves and then coming along, more or less with a take-it-or-leave-it attitude, to present them to us". Sir Con O'Neill, the chief Foreign Office negotiator, was clear that the EEC was essentially about power and prestige. "None of its policies was essential to us; many of them were objectionable." The terms for entry O'Neill considered "burdensome", including sharing Britain's fishing grounds, accepting the Common Agricultural Policy, and agreeing to a large financial contribution. But he considered it necessary to "swallow the lot".

Belief that EEC membership 'at any price' was the only cure for Britain's perceived diplomatic, economic and political malaise was now the orthodoxy in official circles, and de Gaulle's successive vetoes seem only to have confirmed this view: Britain was 'the sinking *Titanic*', and Europe the lifeboat, into which it must scramble, whatever the drawbacks. So Britain formally entered the EEC on 1 January 1973, with Ireland and Denmark. The rest of EFTA remained outside.

When Labour returned to power in 1974, Harold Wilson announced the intention of "renegotiating and denegotiating" a settlement he had condemned as unfavourable, and putting the result to a referendum. Wilson's efforts at renegotiation had no



In 1967 Charles de Gaulle vetoed Britain's application to join the EEC with "quite exceptional bitterness... and scorn"



A consignment of Austin cars, ready for dispatch. In the 1950s, Britain had been a world leader in steel, nuclear power, jet aircraft and cars, but Europe accounted for just 10 per cent of British exports

TOPFOTO

THE HISTORY ESSAY

In 1975, the country was led by the political elite of all parties into a community whose explicit political ambitions for 'ever closer union' most of its people have never espoused



Edward Heath delivers a speech after signing the Treaty of Accession for Britain's proposed entry to the EEC, 22 January 1972. He had successfully persuaded the French that Britain was ready to prioritise Europe over other parts of the world

significant outcome, but the modified terms were presented as a British victory. Public support had collapsed since the first failed attempt to join, so the government mounted a huge publicity campaign with vociferous support from business and most of the intelligentsia. The issue was carefully depoliticised, indeed trivialised: "The community... hasn't made the French eat German food or the Dutch drink Italian beer." The main theme was the EEC's fast economic growth (which ironically had just reached its end, precipitated by a sudden rise in the international price of oil). The attractions of membership were represented on the cover of an official pamphlet, *The British European*, by a young woman in a skimpy Union Jack bikini proclaiming "EUROPE IS FUN! More Work But More Play Too!" The country chose to stay in by 67 per cent of those voting.

Exaggerated pessimism from the 1950s to the 1970s concerning Britain's post-imperial decline compared with what seemed the success of the continent was thus the driving motive for joining the EEC. Of idealism about 'the European project' there was little, even among those who were directing British policy. "The question is," Harold Macmillan had written, "how to live with the Common Market economically and turn its political effects into channels harmless to us."

The country was thus led by the political elite of all parties into a community whose explicit political ambitions for 'ever closer union' most of its people have never espoused. Many who voted for the EEC in 1975 later believed that the full political implications of membership had never been made clear to them. Four decades later, an opinion poll taken a few days before the 2016 referendum showed that only 6 per cent of people in Britain favoured giving greater powers to the EU, compared with 34 per cent in France and 26 per cent in Germany. Following that referendum, by a great historic irony, Britain may be heading back towards the sort of associate status with the EU that it could have had in the late 1960s as the leading member of EFTA. An episode of its history has ended. **H**

Professor Robert Tombs is a historian and author specialising in modern European history. His books include *The English and Their History* (Allen Lane, 2014)

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Emergency appeal to save the Grauer's gorilla issued by Fauna & Flora International. 12 September deadline.

Photo: Simon J. Child/Intergalactic Gorilla Productions



Without action now the Grauer's gorilla could be gone forever – cut the coupon or go to www.savegorillas.org.uk to help protect the remaining 3,800 gorillas.

Consumed by conflict and caught in the grip of a severe conservation crisis, the Grauer's gorilla – the world's largest gorilla – is fighting for survival.

Fauna & Flora International (FFI) has put out an urgent call to the global community to save the remaining 3,800 or so Grauer's gorillas.

Funds are sought immediately to help protect new community nature reserves that are essential to the survival of the remaining gorillas between the Maiko and Kahuzi-Biega National Parks in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is a crucial step towards protecting these elusive and Endangered apes from complete extinction.

The Grauer's gorilla faces multiple threats to its survival – all of them due to human activity. A major expansion of agriculture and pastures in the DRC in recent years has put enormous strain on the gorilla's shrinking habitat. Industry, too, has taken its toll, with natural habitats squeezed by extensive mining for gold and coltan – a mineral used in making mobile phones. Hunting and the continuing consumption of illegal 'bush meat' have also caused many apes to be killed. What's more, continuous conflict has made it incredibly challenging to enforce wildlife protection.

As a result, numbers of Grauer's gorillas have plummeted. Just 15 years ago there were around 17,000 Grauer's gorillas in the wild. Today, scientists believe that at most 3,800 may still remain alive.

Conservationists are now calling for the species to be reclassified as Critically Endangered. We must act as quickly as possible to save the remaining gorillas – and FFI needs your urgent help to do it.

FFI wants to protect existing gorilla families in a vulnerable – currently

unprotected – area between the Maiko and Kahuzi-Biega National Parks. These families are vital to saving the remaining Grauer's gorillas from extinction.

This gorilla protection has only become possible in recent years. Since the elections in the DRC in 2006, and the increased stability that came with them, conservation teams are starting to consolidate a series of community reserves to ensure the gorillas are fully protected.



Photo: Gill Shaw

"The Maiko and Kahuzi-Biega National Parks in the DRC are home to some of the most endangered species in Africa, including the Grauer's gorilla. However, as human populations in the region expand so too does the risk from habitat loss. A participatory form of conservation is giving these communities a means to exist and is helping the Grauer's gorilla and other wildlife. Time is short and I urge supporters of FFI to quickly back this vital work that is crucial to the survival of the Grauer's gorilla."

**Sir David Attenborough OM FRS,
Fauna & Flora International vice-president**

For the species to remain genetically viable, it is crucial that the gorilla families can interbreed and are not separated by deforestation and agriculture expansion in an unprotected area. FFI knows community managed land is a sustainable way to achieve this.

These community reserves are absolutely vital to the future of the remaining Grauer's gorillas – because they will prevent the gorilla population becoming fragmented.

To do all this FFI needs to raise £130,489.56 to protect 10,847.67 km² of forest, where the gorillas are at risk. The £130,489.56 must be raised as soon as possible so that the team at FFI have time to plan ahead.

Meanwhile unprotected gorillas are dying from the threats they face every day. The Grauer's gorilla is on the very edge of survival. Together we can save it. Please send your gift by 12 September at the latest.

One of the world's rarest apes faces extinction

Population plummets by 77% from 17,000 to around 3,800

Fauna & Flora International (FFI) have launched an emergency appeal to raise £130,489.56 from readers that will enable them to push ahead with the protection of new Community Reserves in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is crucial to the battle to save the Endangered Grauer's gorilla from extinction. You can contribute by cutting the coupon below, visiting www.savegorillas.org.uk or calling 01223 749019. Please respond by 12 September.

How you can help save the Grauer's gorilla

£130,489.56 is sought by 12 September to urgently protect a series of community nature reserves that will safeguard the gorillas in unprotected areas – where they are at risk of losing their habitat and being killed by hunters. These are a few of the items needed:

- **£40.10** could pay for rations for a gorilla survey team
- **£129.36** could pay for fuel to run the team's off-road vehicle for a month
- **£258.72** could pay for a GPS unit and batteries, to help the teams locate gorilla families in the dense rainforest
- **£679.15** could pay for a satellite phone, to help the teams report and respond to emergencies
- **£19,180** could fund the entire DRC conservation team for 6 months.

Any donations, large or small, will be received with thanks and could go a long way to helping us to save the Grauer's gorilla.

Cut the coupon below and return it with your gift to FFI, to help save the remaining 3,800 Endangered Grauer's gorillas. Alternatively, go to www.savegorillas.org.uk or call 01223 749019.

I want to help save the remaining 3,800 Grauer's gorillas with a donation of £ _____



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☐ I enclose a cheque payable to Fauna & Flora International **OR**

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Photo: Alison Mollon



Gorillas like Chimanuka need your help
Chimanuka is a silverback that lives in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. There are 17 gorillas in Chimanuka's family including 5 females and 11 infants. Your support could help protect their natural habitat and ensure their future survival.



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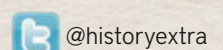
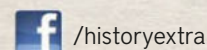


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Henry V: *the caring king*

Fretting about the dispossessed and trying to save heretics from the flames aren't acts often associated with one of England's great military heroes.

But Henry V did a lot more than put hapless Frenchmen to the sword on the battlefield. As **Malcolm Vale** reveals, the hero of Agincourt was also a sovereign with a softer side

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES BOSWELL

Henry was genuinely worried about the plight of the poor

Henry V was an exceptionally hard-working king. He spent as much, if not more, of his time dealing with the burdensome affairs of church and state as he did on military matters.

Henry's direct intervention in the business of ruling, his speaking voice, and his decisive – often abrupt – manner are spelt out in the surviving documents. Some of these are endorsed with his signature, or 'sign manual', in the form 'RH' (Rex Henricus or Roy Henry).

Around one in 10 of these documents survive today, and some are annotated in the king's own hand. His extraordinary grasp of detail and his concern that a just resolution be reached, are striking. Humble men and women, not only the great and good (or not so good), sought his judgment, his pardon and his mercy. Their petitions to him are witness to that.

So, after receiving a petition from some needy supplicants, in April 1419 he ordered his officers: "To do justice unto them, and especially so that the poorer party shall suffer no wrong."

Similarly in May 1421, petitioned by a poor woman, he instructed that she should "receive justice the more favourably, considering the poverty of the said Margery".

A particularly striking case was that of Robert Gunthorpe, a London carter, who in February 1419 told the king that he had been in charge of a brewer's dray, carrying a consignment of ale for the royal household, which had to be delivered to the Tower of London. But, as he got near to the Barbican, the cart was overturned, and the barrels of ale broken open, for the horses had "bolted, because of the great fear they had of the roaring of the king's lions [in the Lion Tower there] and... unless he receives your merciful grace and succour... he will be forced to pay for the said ale... but as he is only a poor labourer, who has to work for his living, he requests pardon for its loss..." Henry granted his petition.

Here then was a king who felt what seems a genuine concern for the welfare of his subjects.



He tried to save the lives (and souls) of heretics

"It seemed to him that he was better suited to be a man of the church than a soldier, and that his eldest brother seemed to him to be more suited to being a soldier than the said king..." Remarkable as it may appear today, given the king's reputation as one of England's great military heroes, this contemporary description of Henry V wasn't so far from the truth.

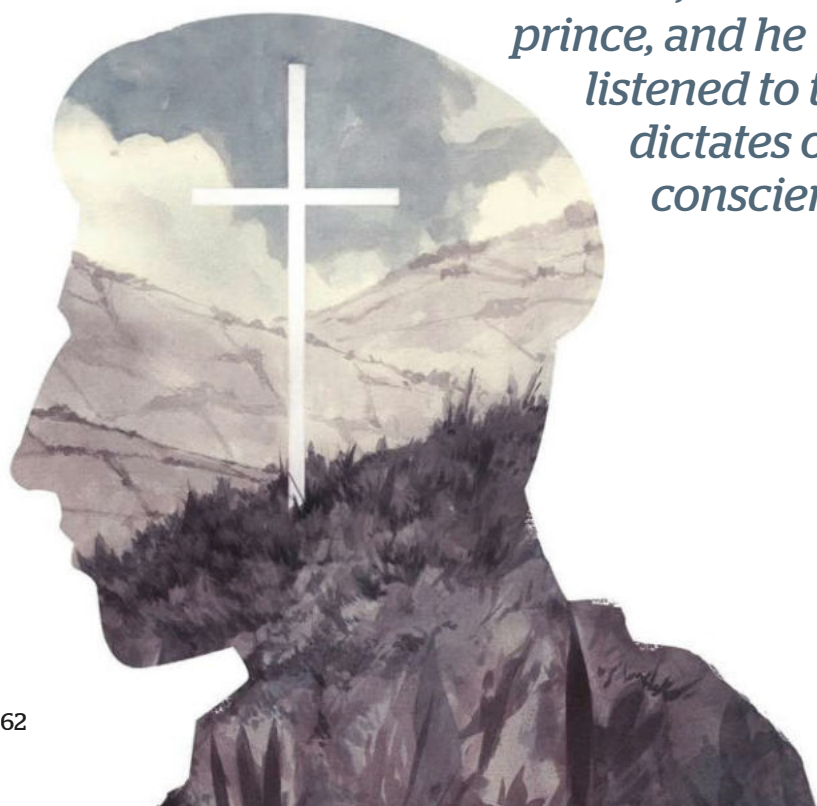
Henry was a vigorous monastic reformer. He created two new monastic foundations during his reign – the Carthusian monastery of Sheen and the Brigittine convent of Syon, both on the Thames – and also attempted a reform of the older-established religious orders. The black monks – the Benedictines – rich and heavily endowed, should, he thought, be restored to the ascetic and austere religious life advocated by their founder, St Benedict. In May 1421, the king assembled 60 English abbots and priors, and over 300 monks of the order, at Westminster and personally addressed

them on their shortcomings. If the church could, or would not set its house in order, he would do it for them.

Henry was a studious, bookish prince, and he listened to the dictates of his conscience. That conscience may not have been unduly disturbed by episodes such as the notorious killing of prisoners at Agincourt, yet this was by no means unprecedented in later medieval warfare.

Here was a king who at least tried to practise what he preached. He was not a bigot. He remonstrated with the dissident Sir John Oldcastle, attempting to persuade him of (what Henry regarded) as the error of his ways. In 1410, Henry, as prince, tried to save the life (and soul) of John Badby as he was being burned as a condemned heretic. And he pardoned large numbers of Sir John's Lollard followers (religious radicals fiercely critical of the established church) convicted for their parts in the Oldcastle rising of 1414.

Henry was a studious, bookish prince, and he listened to the dictates of his conscience



He played the harp, the flute and the recorder

The hero of Agincourt has traditionally been more associated with trebuchets than treble clefs. But, in reality, Henry V loved music – and he wasn't content with passively listening to it.

Henry, like the biblical king David, had learned the harp at an early age, and continued to play into later life. We know that a new harp, with a leather case and 12 spare strings, was dispatched across the



channel to him in France, while was on campaign there in September 1421.

Henry also played the recorder and the flute. And he found time to compose settings of the *Gloria* and *Sanctus* from the Mass. (Musicological opinion once attributed these to Henry IV but is now confident that they were crafted by his son.) This is sophisticated choral polyphony, worthy of the best composers of church music of his time. Its authorship is identified by the words 'Roy Henry' in the British Library's Old Hall manuscript of contemporary musical Mass settings.

Henry's band of secular minstrels went everywhere with him. He even remembered them as he lay dying at the Castle of Vincennes to the east of Paris, when he gave, "by word of mouth", life annuities to 11 of them.

He spoke the people's language

"Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well." With these opening words of address in some of his letters, Henry V made himself part of a momentous process in the history of our language and our political culture. If we're looking for that rare phenomenon – a permanent legacy left by a medieval ruler – the establishment of English as a language of government, administration, politics and diplomacy was, in large part, the work of Henry V.

Before Henry's reign, England's rulers corresponded with their subjects in Latin and Norman French. Middle English had gained ground as a literary medium in the so-called 'Age of Chaucer' (1350–1400). But it was not until Henry V composed his first letters, instructions and memoranda in English that it began to be used in diplomatic and political circles.

Henry's subjects soon followed his example. The London Brewers' Guild, in July 1422, resolved to keep their records no longer in French but in English. They were in turn followed by the London Goldsmiths, while other civic bodies – at Bristol (1416) and York (1419) – had already begun to do so.

It's been claimed that the 'triumph of English' was a form of 'redemption' of the language from its subservience to foreign tongues. But there may be another explanation. In May 1420, Henry V's Treaty of Troyes with France upheld the separate existences of the two kingdoms in a future Anglo-French dual monarchy. Both countries were to keep their own laws, customs, governments and, it seems, languages.

In 1417 Henry began to write from France to his English subjects in their vernacular tongue. But his Norman and other French subjects were always addressed in their own vernacular language. The creation of the Anglo-French union enhanced, rather than suppressed, the separate political and linguistic identities of the two peoples.

The English language had little impact outside the British Isles for hundreds of years – it had to wait until the 18th century to be 'discovered' in continental Europe. But Henry V had started an unstoppable movement. To this day, Royal Letters of Assent to Acts of Parliament begin with the words 'Trusty and well-beloved...'

The establishment of English as a language of government and diplomacy was, in large part, the work of Henry V

We know that a new harp, with a leather case and 12 spare strings, was dispatched to him in France

He gave peace a chance

For 600 years, Henry V's legacy has been dominated by his feats on the battlefield. Historian Keith Dockray captured this reputation perfectly when he wrote that Henry was "a warlord... who clearly enjoyed campaigning and felt most at ease in the company of his comrades in arms".

So it may come as a surprise to learn that Henry was a peace-maker, who actively sought to reconcile the two warring kingdoms of England and France. Towards the end of his reign, he wrote in Anglo-German diplomatic instructions: "What good and profit might arise if there were peace and rest among Christian princes." He was, he said, "now [in December 1421] at the final point and conclusion of his labours and, through God's grace and the help of his allies and friends, shall soon bring this war to an end".

In the event, Henry didn't realise this ambition – his premature death in August 1422 put paid to that. But there's evidence that, during his last two years, he was seeking a resolution of the conflict that had set England and France at odds for a century. Intermediaries, both papal and secular, were acting on his behalf to explore avenues leading towards a peace settlement. We do not know what form that might have taken, and whether a long-term partition of the kingdom between the English and French kings might have resulted from it – or whether a longer-lasting dual monarchy of England and France, as set out in Henry's peace treaty with France at Troyes in May 1420, might have been a viable option.

With hindsight, it's easy for us to dismiss such possibilities, supporting the inevitable collapse of any Anglo-French union – but the picture was by no means so clear in 1422. At the time there were

those, even in France, who saw Henry as a potential saviour, rather than destroyer, of the French kingdom. And he stood head and shoulders above contemporaries.

Unlike the insane Charles VI of France, his disinherited, inexperienced and untried son the Dauphin Charles, or the bankrupt and embattled German emperor Sigismund, Henry V was a true king. **11**

Intermediaries, both papal and secular, were acting on his behalf to explore avenues leading towards a peace settlement



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Malcolm Vale is emeritus research fellow in modern history at St John's College, Oxford. He specialises in Anglo-French history during the late Middle Ages

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► **Henry V: The Conscience of a King** by Malcolm Vale will soon be published by Yale University Press

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BOOKS



Alex von Tunzelmann photographed in the London Library. "Together, the Suez crisis and the Hungarian uprising pushed the world close to nuclear war," she says

Photography by
Mike Abrahams



INTERVIEW / ALEX VON TUNZELMANN

"The Suez crisis made Britain look incompetent and petty – a spent force"

Alex von Tunzelmann talks to **Matt Elton** about her book on the twin crises of the autumn of 1956 – the Suez crisis and the Hungarian uprising – and how they pushed the world to the brink

MIKE ABRAHAMS

PROFILE ALEX VON TUNZELMANN

A graduate of University College, Oxford, von Tunzelmann has worked as a researcher, screenwriter and columnist for publications including *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*. Her previous books include *Red Heat: Conspiracy, Murder, and the Cold War in the Caribbean* (Simon & Schuster, 2011) and *Reel History: The World According to the Movies* (Atlantic, 2015).

IN CONTEXT

Two key global events defined the autumn of 1956. The Suez crisis saw Britain, France and Israel launch a politically disastrous assault on Egypt, which was both condemned by US president Dwight D Eisenhower and the cause of rising tensions with the Soviet Union. The near-simultaneous Hungarian revolt against Soviet rule, meanwhile, was brutally quashed. These episodes caused a nuclear crisis and lasting tension in regions including the Middle East.

Why do you think that this story has been under-served in previous books?

My book looks at the Suez crisis simultaneously with the Hungarian uprising against the Soviet Union. What I found when I started researching is that a lot of people don't appreciate that both of these massive international events happened within the same fortnight in the autumn of 1956, and interacted with each other in a significant way. Together, they pushed the world as close as it got to nuclear war in the period between 1945 and the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

There were so many different things happening geopolitically at once, and it was a coincidence that these events happened at the same time – but the fact that they did became extremely fateful. The Suez crisis was the tipping point between the period of imperial European rule, in which France and Britain had a major say in the world, and the rising world order of the US and the Soviet Union having a lot more sway. It represented a move towards superpowers, rather than empires, running the show.

Were any factors or events key in setting the crises in motion?

For every nation involved it was about something different and quite existential – and the crises really brought in a lot of the world. There really aren't rational explanations for a lot of what happened in the Suez crisis and the Hungarian rebellion, and a lot of that comes down to national emotion. For the French, it was about a rebellion against their rule in Algeria: they were convinced, wrongly, that the Egyptian president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, was behind it and that getting rid of him would calm everything down.

Britain wanted to overthrow Nasser and have control of the Suez canal because it

was the main conduit for its global trade, particularly oil. This was all about oil on some level, because that's the way in which conflicts now run.

These two nations considered all sorts of things to get rid of Nasser, including assassination. The scary thing, looking at this through modern eyes, is that you are reminded of the 21st-century situation in Iraq. They had no real plan for what would happen if they did assassinate Nasser, what sort of government they'd bring in as a replacement – no kind of exit strategy at all.

How did the Tripartite Aggression unfold, and how far was it expected?

It wasn't really expected. The Tripartite Aggression – Britain, France and Israel – was a secret plan they cooked up together. It was so crazy that afterwards many people in the British establishment refused to believe it had happened, and denied it for a long time.

The idea was that Israel would invade Egypt on the pretence that they were going to root out infiltrators, because there was already tension in the region. They would stage a raid into Egypt towards the Suez Canal which Britain and France would condemn, telling both sides that they had to stop fighting or they would invade. Britain and France would make Israel and Egypt both retreat a set distance from the Suez Canal, and then ever-so-selflessly occupy the canal for the security of the world.

Because they had planned it in advance they knew that Israel would abide by their terms but Egypt would not, and the idea was that they would then be able to fight all the way to Cairo and overthrow Nasser.

It was a thinly disguised bluff, and how they thought they could get away with it is anyone's guess. Everyone quickly spotted that Britain and France had been colluding with Israel, and the Soviet Union was convinced that the US was also involved.

"This was all about oil on some level, because that's the way in which conflicts now run"

Turning to events in Hungary, what happened on 25 October?

'Bloody Thursday' – 25 October 1956 – is a very significant day for Hungary. It's still very hard to know precise details of what happened, and there are still very many contradictory reports, but effectively thousands of people were gathered in a large and peaceful protest in the main square in Budapest when somebody started shooting.

It's still impossible to know who, but we do know that a large number of people were killed. It was deeply shocking, brutal bloodshed, that really galvanised people. There were pitched battles in the streets, fought by often incredibly young rebels. They were desperate, and those who survived were terribly punished afterwards.

To what extent did the situation in Hungary push an already volatile situation closer to the brink?

It clearly did, and you can see that the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev was thinking very hard about Suez when he was dealing with Hungary.

Both of these crises were referred to the UN, which was awkward because normally Britain would have stood by the US and condemned Soviet aggression – but since it was doing exactly the same thing, the UN was hamstrung. The US went against Britain and France at the UN for the first time, so this was a real danger to that alliance.

How difficult was the position in which the US found itself?

It was extraordinarily difficult: they were trapped between a lot of different competing alliances. Britain and France had lied to them, and were continuing to lie, when it was perfectly obvious what was going on. It was also complicated because, although the US and Israel didn't have quite as solid a relationship as they do now, it was still a pretty solid relationship.

It had therefore been widely expected in Britain, France and Israel that the US would not go against Israel in public, but in fact they did – extremely strongly. This was all happening in the week leading up to Dwight D Eisenhower's second presidential election, too, and it was assumed that he wouldn't stamp down on Israel because he would lose the election if he lost Jewish votes in the US. But actually Eisenhower was very clear that



French paratroopers leave Egypt as the Suez crisis deepens, 1956. "Britain and France had lied to the United States, and were continuing to lie, even when it was perfectly obvious what was going on," says Alex von Tunzelmann

he didn't mind about losing the election, he just wanted to do the right thing.

Why was the Tripartite Aggression so badly bungled?

When you look through the military plans, they're extremely poor and full of gaps – but actually the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that, repeatedly. They were really opposed to this whole operation, and advised the British prime minister, Anthony Eden, that the consequences would be terrible. All the advice was not to do it, but Eden ignored it.

It was really a disaster. The British and French got about a third of the way down the canal before they had to stop, because the weight of world opinion was such that they simply had to. Israel achieved its objectives initially but soon lost Sinai again.

Things weren't much better in Hungary, meanwhile, where the rebellion had been completely crushed. The Soviet Union, tragically, rolled back its small, nascent reforms and life became much more unpleasant for many people living in the Soviet bloc.

And neither Britain nor France achieved their objectives. All that the crises achieved was to massively strengthen Nasser and, separately, Soviet control of its satellite states.

Is it fair to say that this was the last point at which Britain was a major player on the world stage?

That's a difficult question, because Britain has undoubtedly still played a role. But what

is astonishing about this situation is that, when people talked about superpowers in the 1950s, they talked about three: Britain, the US and the Soviet Union. After Suez, they only talked about two.

It was so humiliating for Britain – a bad, immoral plan that they didn't even achieve successfully – that it made the nation look incompetent, petty and a spent force. It reduced its influence globally quite substantially. Eventually some of that came back, but it showed that Britain was no longer a superpower and that, ultimately, it had to bow down and do what the US told it to.

Are there any misconceptions about this period that you would like this book to help correct?

The one that I still encounter most commonly in Britain is an amazingly strong sense that the US stitched us up. That's really not justified by events at all. Britain and France wanted to invade Egypt, and Eisenhower said straight away to Eden that he should not even contemplate it – and he kept saying it consistently all the way through, in private and public. Yet somehow the British managed to convince themselves that the US would back them up anyway.

So, actually, the Americans were completely straight most of the time and did exactly what they said they'd do – the problem was that the British plan was terrible. I do think that when we're looking at our own history we need to be honest that this was not our finest hour.

"When we're looking at our own history, we need to be honest that this was not our finest hour"

What parallels can we draw between 1956 and 2016?

I think we probably feel quite a lot of sympathy right now with our equivalents in 1956. When I was researching this subject – and I started on this book four years ago, so this certainly isn't something I'd planned – I was reading about these ever-more extreme events in the 1956 newspapers, how seemingly every day there was extraordinary news that upset the existing order of the world. And, during the summer of 2016 in the UK, many of us have been feeling that again. There's a huge amount of turmoil going on both here and in the wider world. However we feel politically about events such as Brexit, they represent a major upheaval and it's hard to know how things will turn out. **H**



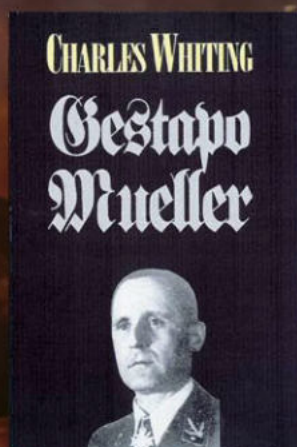
Blood and Sand: Suez, Hungary and the Crisis That Shook the World by Alex von Tunzelmann (Simon & Schuster, 480 pages, £25)

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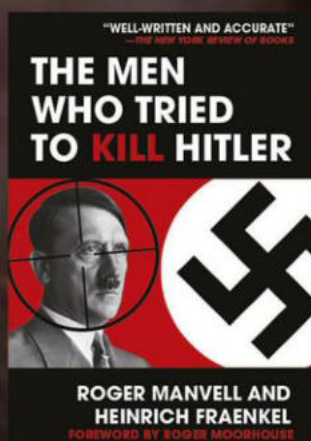
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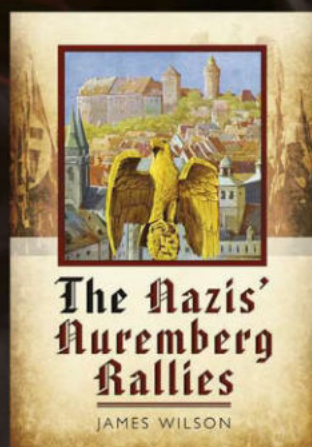
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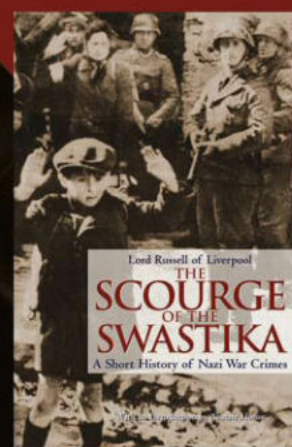
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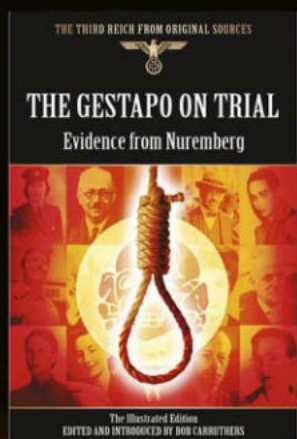
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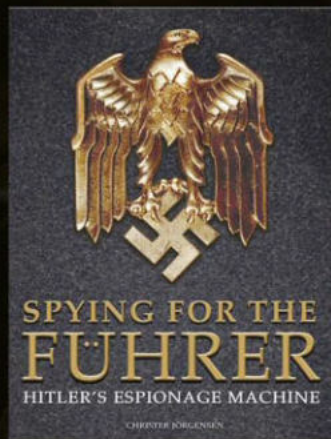
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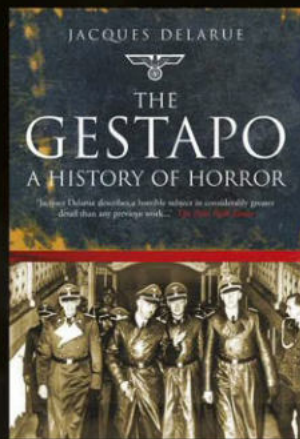
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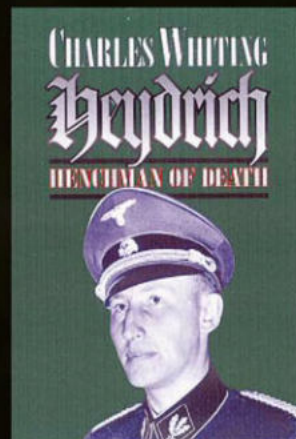
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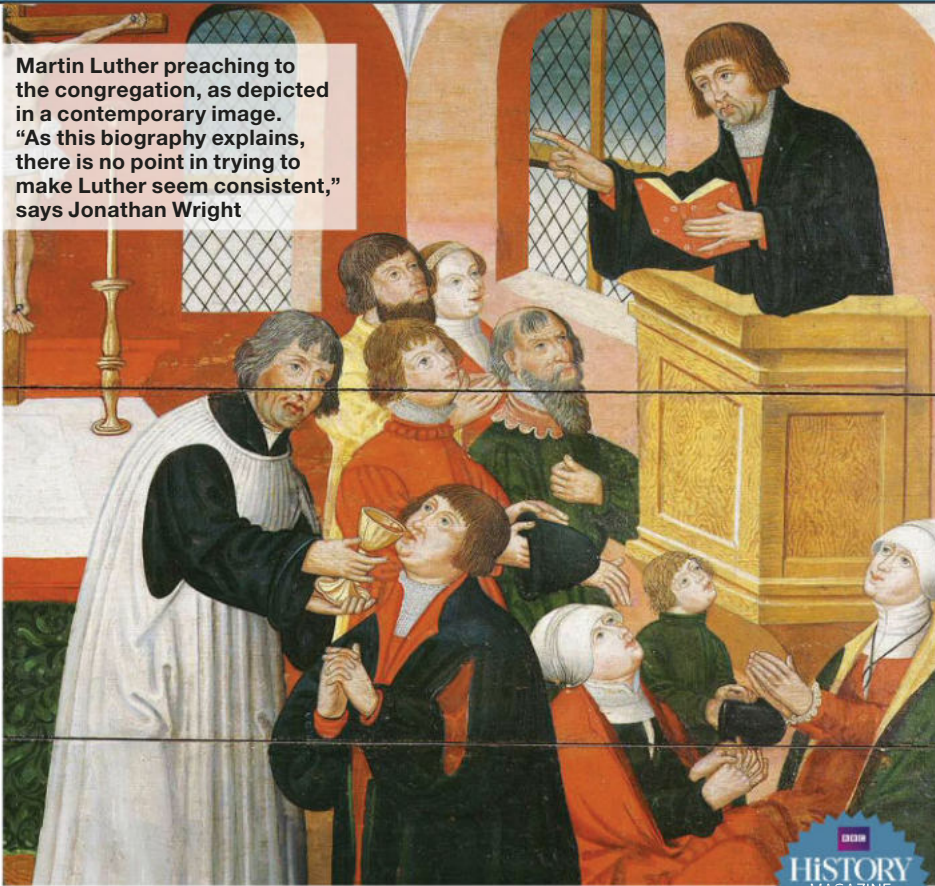
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REVIEWS



Martin Luther preaching to the congregation, as depicted in a contemporary image. "As this biography explains, there is no point in trying to make Luther seem consistent," says Jonathan Wright



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Unlikely revolutionary

JONATHAN WRIGHT enjoys an excellent study of a theologian who probably didn't mean to start a large-scale Reformation

Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet

by Lyndal Roper

The Bodley Head, 592 pages, £25



Martin Luther did not simply wake up one morning in 1517 and decide to tear Christendom apart. He was a little-known Augustinian monk teaching, as Lyndal

Roper puts it in this new book, at "an obscure university in an unknown corner of the empire". His *Ninety-Five Theses*, which surfaced on 31 October of that year, can best be understood as "hypothetical claims to be tested through subsequent argument".

The theses were certainly provocative, mocking the idea that people could "earn their way out of purgatory" through an invention such as 'indulgences' (rewards for good works, prayers, or acts of penance that were held to reduce a person's time in purgatory).

Yet no one, least of all Luther, expected them to trigger a Reformation. Roper reminds us that, at this stage, Luther did not have a fully developed theological programme, and that there was nothing inevitable about how subsequent events unfolded. In 1517, Luther was probably just attempting to make a minor splash in local academic and clerical circles. This will be worth remembering when some of us dust off the party hats for next year's

500th anniversary of his protest.

Luther may have been, in Roper's phrase, "an unlikely revolutionary", but he quickly grew into the role. He emerged as a prolific polemicist with a talent for rallying support and, by 1521, he was boldly defying the emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms. "The courage he showed" there, Roper writes, "was breathtaking."

Luther was also sustained by an anger that was "allied to his greatest spurts of creativity", but there was a darker side. Roper portrays someone who bore grudges and fumed when he felt his supposed allies were perverting his vision. In the not uncommon attacks on former friends, "there is something chilling about the no-holds-barred nature of Luther's hatred". In later years, with the Lutheran movement increasingly divided, Luther's "irascibility made him a liability as a leader".

Luther's contradictions are at the heart of this excellent study. We meet Luther the jolly dinner companion, with a good line in scatological puns, but also Luther the author of horrible diatribes against Jewish people. The man who caused such cultural turmoil was also, to his bootstraps, a social and political conservative with no desire to see the Gospel being used as a liberating force by the German peasantry.

As Roper points out, Luther made "some of the most misogynist remarks of any thinker", but was also remarkably relaxed about sexuality and insisted that, within marriage, it should "give bodily pleasure to both women and men". As this biography explains, there is no point in trying to make Luther seem consistent.

Roper is also aware that "psychohistory has long had a bad press" and that Luther, posthumously placed on the analyst's couch, has become "a byword for the worst kinds of

Martin Luther's contradictions are at the heart of this excellent book



COMING SOON...

"Next issue, our expert reviewers will be considering new books on subjects including North America's native peoples and the history of modern Vietnam. Plus David Reynolds and Kristina Spohr will be discussing **Transcending the Cold War**, their look at summitry between 1970 and 1990." *Matt Elton, reviews editor*

reductionist history". An intimate account of his motives and intellectual meanderings is still possible, however, since "we probably know more about his inner life than about that of any other 16th-century individual". Roper can't help but dwell on Luther's relationship with his father – early rebellion as one of the taproots of all subsequent disobedience – but psychobabble is largely avoided and, all told, you are unlikely to encounter a finer study of Luther's complex character.

The book's conclusion is sound: it was Luther's "remarkable courage and sense of purpose that created the Protestant Reformation and it was his stubbornness and capacity to demonise his opponents

You are unlikely to encounter a finer study of Luther's complex character

that nearly destroyed it". How curious that the whole affair started almost accidentally. If Luther hadn't sent copies of his theses to the archbishop of Mainz and the bishop of Brandenburg, along with covering letters of "remarkable self-confidence, even of arrogance", little fuss would have been made.

History had other plans and, over time, Luther became obsessed with forging a Reformation of his own design. Much to the annoyance of more radical reformers, he always insisted, albeit via challenging terminology, on the 'Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist' and that the sacrament had more than symbolic meaning. Pope-bashing was mandatory, but most religious images were fine, whatever the hotheads in Zurich and Geneva said.

People talked of a continental Protestant movement but Martin Luther, always a man of parochial habits, was far more interested in organising a church for Germany. "An unlikely revolutionary", indeed. **H**

Jonathan Wright is honorary fellow in the department of theology and religion at Durham University

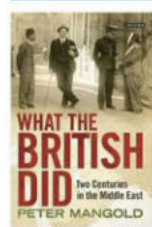
Oil and trouble

JAMES BARR on an account of Britain's rocky relationship with the Middle East from the late 18th century onwards

What the British Did: Two Centuries in the Middle East

by Peter Mangold

IB Tauris, 384 pages, £25



"We don't want Koweit (sic)," a British civil servant wrote in 1899. "But we don't want any one else to have it." This, in a nutshell, is the basis for Britain's involvement in the

Middle East, a subject that Peter Mangold here explores up to the present day, including the 2003 Iraq War.

Britain's interest dates to the era when, after losing the US, it refocused its imperial ambitions on the east. Within a century it was dependent on India as a source of labour and military manpower and as a destination for exports and investment. The Middle East mattered because it lay between the two. Only later did its oil become a factor.

Britain confined itself to tackling piracy and slavery offshore until 1882, when it took control of Egypt. By then, it already had strong economic ties with the country. Parliament's decision to invade, Mangold notes, may not have been unrelated to the fact that more than 60 of its members had Egyptian investments.

Their chief aim being to deny others control over the route to India, the British wanted to avoid being drawn into the Middle East too deeply. "We certainly do not want to administer their disgusting territories," said one official. The alternative was

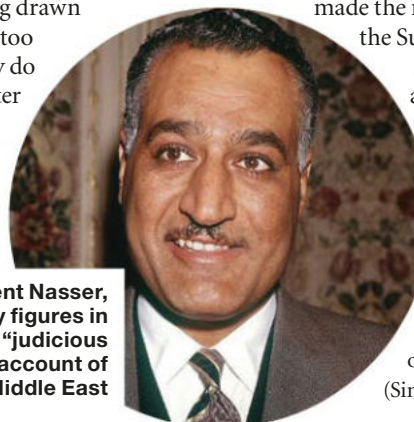
indirect rule. "We do not govern Egypt, we only govern the governors," said Lord Cromer. War in 1914 changed that. "This would be a war not so much in, as for, the Middle East," says Mangold. Britain took more direct control, and offered parts of the region to Sharif Hussein of Mecca, the French, and the Zionist movement – contradictions that stored up trouble.

In Egypt, and in the new mandates they inherited, the British were frustrated that their power was limited and the Arabs angry that they were not really free. The governors the British governed were stuck in the middle. In a suicide note, one interwar Iraqi prime minister complained he was seen as "a traitor to the country and a slave of the English". The British would have disagreed.

Although the British clung on through the Second World War, Mangold argues that the assertive way in which they did so hastened their departure. British rule in Palestine collapsed after the Arab-Jewish conflict it had largely created proved unresolvable. Relations with the Egyptians had become toxic after the British threatened to depose King Farouk in 1942. Gamal Abdel Nasser, who ousted Farouk a decade later, cited this incident as the moment that convinced him it was time to throw the British out. When the British, dependent on sterling-denominated Middle Eastern oil for their postwar economic recovery, made the matter one of honour, the Suez crisis followed.

Mangold may not say anything earth-shatteringly new here, but this is a judicious and sympathetic view of British involvement in the Middle East. **H**

James Barr is author of *A Line in the Sand* (Simon & Schuster, 2011)



Egypt's president Nasser, one of the key figures in Peter Mangold's "judicious and sympathetic" account of Britain in the Middle East

Silbury Hill near Avebury, a landscape that arose once humans started farming and “settled down”, says reviewer Francis Pryor



New seeds

FRANCIS PRYOR is impressed with a fascinating look at our prehistoric ancestors, from hunter gatherers to the early farming economies

The Tale of the Axe: How the Neolithic Revolution Transformed Britain

by David Miles

Thames and Hudson, 432 pages, £19.95



Despite the title of this book, it is certainly not a ‘tale’: it is far more comprehensive. So let me try to give an impression of its huge range. It would make a first-rate textbook for university students, as it covers a large selection of past and present research projects, and everything is comprehensively referenced.

The first three chapters are devoted to human origins, going right back to early

hominins and the unknown LCA (last common ancestor) of humans and apes, some 7 million years ago. We are then escorted through the rise of Heidelberg, a settlement in what is now south-western Germany, and Neanderthal humans up until the origins of our own sub-species, *Homo sapiens*, in Africa. By 40,000 years ago, modern humans had arrived in Europe.

In the second part of the book, meanwhile, we learn how post-Ice Age hunters adapted to warmer conditions, and how farming began in the near east

A lively and very human account of our prehistoric ancestors

some 10,000 years ago. David Miles then describes how the concept of farming spread to Britain, both along the shores of the Mediterranean, and up the Danube into central Europe. These chapters include a comprehensive discussion of the development of prehistory as a modern, science-based subject of the humanities.

Miles then switches his attention to Britain, with frequent excursions to France. He turns the clock back to the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers of the first five post-Ice Age millennia, and explores the arrival of farming in Britain, around 4000 BC, as well as Neolithic links between Britain and the continent – especially axes made from the mineral jadeite. The origins of special sacred places and rise of Neolithic spirituality are also considered. The final four chapters describe the diverse landscapes that arose once local farming economies had, as it were, ‘settled down’ – taking in all the usual candidates, such as Orkney, Stonehenge and Avebury, as well as lesser known examples such as the Bronze Age fields beneath the runways at Heathrow.

This book is far more ambitious in its scope than the title would suggest. Yes, axes are mentioned from time to time, but not very frequently. Similarly, Britain doesn’t really enter the picture until page 160 (of 432) – and even then it slips from view in many chapters. But these observations are not criticisms of the book, its scope, or its author. Unfortunately, book titles are often heavily tweaked or even created by the publisher’s marketing team. If that is what happened in this case, their choice seems a little odd, as it undersells the fascinating material that lies between the book’s two covers.

But be under no illusions: David Miles has produced a beautifully written, lively and very human account of our prehistoric ancestors. It also underpins the value of archaeology – and why we can never afford to ignore the lessons of the past. **H**

Francis Pryor is an archaeologist specialising in the Bronze and Iron Ages. His books include *Stonehenge: The Story of a Sacred Landscape* (Head of Zeus, 2016)

Jeremy Thorpe arrives at the Old Bailey for his trial in 1979. Despite being cleared, his reputation was destroyed by the events



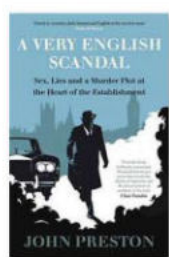
Secrets and lies

FRANCIS BECKETT learns a few new things about a scandal that rocked the nation in the 1970s

A Very English Scandal: Sex, Lies and a Murder Plot at the Heart of the Establishment

by John Preston

Viking, 352 pages, £16.99



Millions of words have been written about Jeremy Thorpe, Liberal leader from 1967 to 1976 and hardly the most significant holder of that office. Does John Preston have

anything new to bring to the party?

Thorpe was brought down by the accusation that he instigated a plot to have a former lover, Norman Scott, murdered, in order to keep secret the fact that he was gay. A jury found him not guilty after he refused to give evidence in his own defence and the trial judge devoted his summing up to a brutal attack on the prosecution witnesses.

When a politician falls as spectacularly as Thorpe did, there are often those who start to lionise him. "Perhaps the most

charismatic figure in British politics since the war," wrote David Randall in *The Independent* seven years ago, but I remember thinking him not a patch on his predecessor Jo Grimond (who also acted as 'caretaker' leader after Thorpe resigned) or his eventual successor David Steel.

The Jeremy Thorpe that John Preston presents here is a mean and shallow man, lacking principle or loyalty, untrustworthy and selfish. He gets this image largely from the late Peter Bessell, Liberal MP for Bodmin and unsuccessful businessman, the Thorpe confidant who ended up giving key evidence against his old friend. It is Preston's interviews with Bessell's son, and to a lesser extent his interviews with Norman Scott, that enable this author to tell us

The Thorpe presented here is a mean and shallow man, lacking principle or loyalty

a few things that we don't know, as well as to add his own insights.

That's the principal added value of *A Very English Scandal*, which actually tells us a lot more about the prosecution witness Bessell than about Thorpe. Bessell makes a fascinating character study. There is no one in the world more foolish and gullible, more prone to idiotic hero-worship, than the businessman who persists in believing that his next scheme will bring him untold riches. The way in which Bessell destroys himself makes a sad and fascinating story. In some ways he, not Thorpe, is the main character in this book.

Occasionally, this reliance on Bessell may lead the author into error. Can anyone be quite so gullible as Bessell seems to have been? There are other minor flaws. There's a startling lack

Medieval disorder

SOPHIE AMBLER is unconvinced by a look at life in the Middle Ages whose contents frequently seem haphazardly selected

A Year in the Life of Medieval England

by Toni Mount

Amberley, 352 pages, £20



There is a myth that the Middle Ages suffer from a lack of sources. This is untrue, especially for England, and especially from the 13th century. With the accession of King John in 1199, the chancery began

to enrol the majority of its outgoing correspondence. The abundant records of a precocious state thus bulk the ranks of letters, chronicles, sermons, wills and miracle collections (the list goes on) to form a base of sources far larger than any person can hope to survey in a lifetime.

Here lies the evidence not only for the politics of the great, but for the experiences of 'ordinary' people. This material can make a penetrating history: Dan Jones's *Realm Divided* (Head of Zeus, 2015), for instance, laces a political

narrative of 1215 with evidence of daily life to tell the story of those who fought and worked in that tumultuous year.

Toni Mount's goal in this book is both more and less ambitious. For each calendar day she summarises an event that occurred "on this day", or provides an illustrative source. The book's canvas is the whole medieval period (although most material is from the later Middle Ages), but the source base is narrow: no use is made of the rolls of central government, which contradict the claim that on some days "nothing happened, or at least nothing was recorded".

Entries are set down at random: for one period in February, a recipe for fig and raisin cream is followed by a note on an anti-Jewish riot in Norwich (of

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of references, and Preston seems unable to mention Harold Wilson without a sneer – describing his “snazzy utopia” or his “pasty face”, for instance – for no apparent reason. Desire for sensation leads him to overreach himself from time to time, and the title seems to me to be a little silly – what is specifically ‘English’ about this story?

Yet Preston makes out his case. Political commentator Iain Dale, who sprang to Thorpe’s defence in 2009 (the year that his bust was unveiled at the House of Commons) was letting his humanity get in the way of his judgment. Jeremy Thorpe (who died in 2014) was, in my opinion, a nasty piece of work. **H**

Francis Beckett is a historian whose books include biographies of four prime ministers

1190, although the year is not given here), followed by a will of 1497, followed by a note on the creation of the Prince of Wales in 1301. Readers are tossed between centuries with no sense of the changing fabric of political, legal, religious and military culture over this vast period.

That much is attributed to websites of doubtful credibility does not inspire confidence. Those interested in a year in medieval life might prefer Jones’s book, while those wanting to discover more about life in the later Middle Ages will find Ian Mortimer’s *Time Traveller’s Guide to Medieval England* (Touchstone, 2009) a more insightful read. **H**

Sophie Ambler, University of East Anglia

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Historical roots

CLARE HICKMAN *commends a passionate love letter to trees that highlights our interrelationship with them over centuries*

The Long, Long Life of Trees

by Fiona Stafford

Yale University Press, 296 pages, £16.99



Trees, as Fiona Stafford demonstrates in this delightful book, are built into our human experience in deep and meaningful ways. Taking Stafford’s personal approach

to the subject, a favourite tree of mine is the *Platanus orientalis*, or oriental plane, in the garden of the Royal College of Physicians, London. This specimen was grown via a cutting from a tree at the Rockefeller Institute, New York – and that tree, in turn, was grown from the seed of the ancient plane tree on the island of Kos, under which Hippocrates, legendary founding father of medicine, is said to have taught. Its presence at this august institution reflects a desire, even among the most scientific of us, to draw a line via a tree back to our starting point.

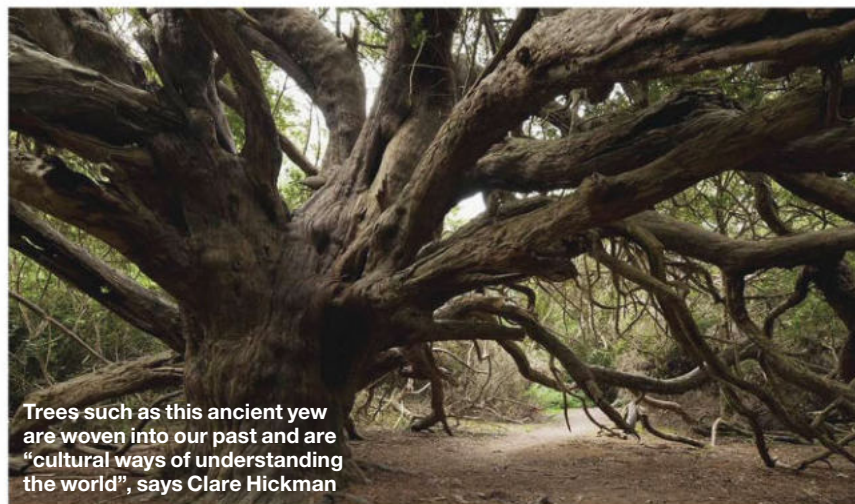
Even in our modern, secular age, trees are built into our daily lives through physical artefacts as well as woven into our spiritual, mythical, cultural and personal ways of understanding the world. Stafford takes a broad approach,

encompassing all of these strands in her exploration of some of the most common European trees. In her consideration of the yew, famous for its poisonous properties, we learn of its description by Robert Graves as the “death tree in all European countries”, as well as its recent medicinal status as the producer of Taxol, a compound that can be used in chemotherapy.

Sometimes this whirlwind approach, which takes in specific as well as generic trees and myths as well as science, makes it hard to catch one’s breath when reading. I bemoan the lack of footnotes, although there is a good list of further reading. However, it is very clear that this is a passionate love letter to trees, one that highlights our long and ongoing interrelationship with them, as well as their growing vulnerabilities to human and other biological threats.

Stafford states in her introduction that if anyone is moved to put her book down and “go in search of a tree or a spade, it will have done its work”. Given the fragility of our tree-lined environment, that is a call to arms that should not go unheeded. **H**

Clare Hickman is lecturer in history at the University of Chester



Trees such as this ancient yew are woven into our past and are “cultural ways of understanding the world”, says Clare Hickman

In the depths of the night
something stirred in London
that would change the city forever ...



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Huffington Post

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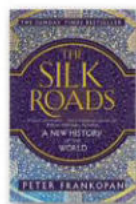
PAPERBACKS



The Silk Roads: A New History of the World

by Peter Frankopan

Bloomsbury, 656 pages, £10.99



At the start of this compelling book, Peter Frankopan turns to geography as the key to unlocking a new narrative of global history.

His argument is beguilingly simple: the region where Europe and Asia meet, from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean to the Himalayas, is the central motor of world history, acting as the conduit and meeting point of peoples, ideas and goods. The inevitable consequences of this location are both progress and conflict, the sum of which is the narrative of historical change.

This area, of great antiquity in its historical role but only known since the 19th century as the Silk Roads, is arrestingly described by Frankopan in his preface as “the world’s central nervous system”. Six hundred fast-paced, information-rich and compelling pages later, few readers will doubt the power of his claim.

Frankopan’s narrative is cast on an epic historical scale, starting with the first civilisations of Mesopotamia and concluding with the events of 9/11 and the hunt for Osama bin Laden. Time and again, Frankopan is able to offer a new angle on well-known historical events by his focus on the lands of the Silk Roads.

He shows us, for example, the extent to which the diverse efforts of Columbus, da Gama and others in the so-called Age of Discovery were pivoted around bypassing that space. In more recent times, a key

arena for both the Second World War and the Cold War that followed was the lands where Europe and Asia meet.

In truth, much of the material that Frankopan relates will not be new to specialists. The book’s great achievement, however, is in pointing out the sheer continuity of the role that this region has played in the forging of world history in the long run. It also amounts to an important new argument about global geopolitics, engaging as it does with ideas that have circulated for a century or more among historians and politicians about regions that act as the ‘pivot of history’.

The real payoff comes in the concluding chapter, which attends to the present day. While the idea of learning the ‘lessons of history’ is an overworked cliché, *The Silk Roads* really does give readers a powerfully informed historical sense of why global tensions today have come to centre on a fracture zone in the Middle East, and the space where Russia and China meet. It also makes it painfully apparent that those reasons, which revolve around natural

resources, religion and politics, show a stark continuity with the motors of world history that the book has tracked for four millennia. This, then, is a historically rigorous, thoughtful and eminently readable history of the present.

Robert J Mayhew is professor of historical geography at the University of Bristol

To Hell and Back: Europe 1914-1949

by Ian Kershaw

Penguin, 624 pages, £12.99



Ian Kershaw is one of the historians best qualified to write a single-volume history on Europe in the first half of the 20th century. He has deep knowledge of the rise of Nazism, one of the period’s most significant aspects, but in *To Hell and Back*, Kershaw also moves out of his comfort zone.

In this work, he weaves together the complex threads of European history, from the

start of the First World War to the point when the Cold War was well and truly under way.

Kershaw’s ambition is as impressive as his success in producing a compelling narrative. That he succeeds in more than doing justice to such a vast topic, in only 600 pages, is a remarkable achievement.

The story told here is a grim one. The outbreak of the First World War was a true turning point – “the great disaster”, as Kershaw calls it. Europe was jerked out of a period of cautious optimism into a new groove. As the old empires collapsed, ethnic hatreds, the rise of fascism and Marxist-Leninism, and strife between successor states came to the fore.

What came next, between 1939 and 1945, was “hell on earth”. But at the end of the book comes hope of a peaceful and prosperous Europe emerging from the old. Kershaw will tell that story in his eagerly awaited follow-up volume. **H**

Gary Sheffield is the author of *Douglas Haig: From the Somme to Victory* (Aurum, 2016)

A Ukrainian family are expelled from their home, c1929. The story that Ian Kershaw tells of 20th-century Europe is “a grim one”, says Gary Sheffield





Newgate prison as depicted in a 19th-century painting. Anna Mazzola's novel is based on a "notorious but now largely forgotten" murder

FICTION

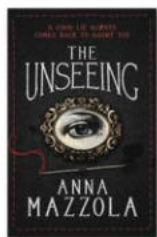
True detective

NICK RENNISON is captivated by a dark, twisting tale of murder and mystery in the streets of Victorian London

The Unseeing

by Anna Mazzola

Tinder Press, 368 pages, £14.99



In the year that Queen Victoria ascends the throne, Edmund Fleetwood is a young and idealistic lawyer, struggling to make a living and escape from the shadow of his domineering father.

His chance appears to have arrived when the home secretary, Lord John Russell, appoints him to investigate a petition for mercy submitted on behalf of Sarah Gale, incarcerated in Newgate prison as an accomplice in the so-called Edgware Road Murder. Her ex-lover, James Greenacre, has been convicted of killing another woman, Hannah Brown, dismembering her body and disposing of the parts at assorted locations in the city. Sarah is believed to have known about the murder and helped Greenacre in its aftermath.

Determined to seek out the truth, Edmund visits Sarah in Newgate where,

separated from her young son and the sister who is also her closest friend, she is sinking into despair. Yet he finds her curiously unwilling to assist him in his efforts to rescue her from the threat of the gallows. Why is she so stubbornly silent about what exactly happened on the night Hannah Brown was killed? What has she to hide? Is she trying to protect someone and, if so, who?

As Edmund works to find answers to these questions, he is not only drawn ever closer to Sarah – who is striving to exercise what little freedom she still possesses in desperate circumstances – but also uncovers some dark secrets in his own family.

Based on a real-life murder, once notorious but now largely forgotten, Anna Mazzola's debut is a gripping, twisting tale of the search for the truth about the crime at its heart. Intricately plotted and convincing in its portrait of the gritty, everyday realities of early Victorian London, *The Unseeing* makes for a darkly pleasurable read. **H**

Nick Rennison is the author of books including *Carver's Truth*, to be published by Corvus in August

THREE MORE REAL-LIFE MURDERS IN FICTION

Fred and Edie

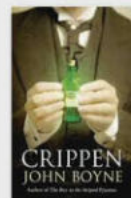
Jill Dawson (2000)



In October 1922, Percy Thompson was attacked and killed while walking home from a night at the theatre. His wife Edith and her young lover Frederick Bywaters were later charged with the murder, tried, and found guilty. Despite pleas for mercy, particularly for Edith, they were both executed. Jill Dawson's remarkable novel takes this suburban *crime passionnel* and turns it into a moving and tragic tale of thwarted love and desire.

Crippen

John Boyne (2004)



More than a century after he was hanged for his crime, Hawley Harvey Crippen, the mild-mannered homeopathic doctor who killed his wife, a blowsy music-hall

singer, remains one of the most celebrated murderers in English history. In this novel, John Boyne vividly reconstructs the story of the murder and (particularly) Crippen's doomed attempt to flee the country with his mistress Ethel Le Neve, travelling in disguise as father and son on board the SS *Montrose*.

The English Monster

Lloyd Shepherd (2012)



The Ratcliff Highway Murders of 1811, in which two families became the victims of an early serial killer, are among the most sensational crimes

in London's history. In the first of several novels he has written featuring Charles Horton, a shrewd investigator for the Regency city's river police, Shepherd concocts an enjoyably fantastical narrative to explain the butchery in the East End. Magic and mystery combine in a very rich and readable brew.

TV & RADIO

Shadow of the past

The Good Terrorist

TV Channel 4

scheduled for Saturday 3 September

In July 1964, anti-apartheid activist John Harris placed a bomb on a whites-only platform at Johannesburg Park station. The explosion killed a 77-year-old woman and injured 23 others. In April 1965, Harris, who had previously been a peaceful campaigner and helped to get the country barred from the Olympics, became the only white political prisoner to be executed by the apartheid regime.

Half a century on, Harris's son returns to South Africa and retraces his father's footsteps. Back in the UK, in an emotional encounter, he meets a woman who was maimed as a child by his father's actions.



Narcissus falls in love with his own reflection and inspires a 'word-idea'

Words and wisdom

The Ideas That Made Us

RADIO Radio 4

scheduled for Monday 8 August

The weekday series in which Bettany Hughes traces 'word-ideas' back to ancient Greece returns. This time around, her themes are character, harmony, narcissism, hubris and technology – and the classicist explores both how we've shaped these notions and how they've shaped us.

An overarching idea is to demonstrate how philosophy isn't just a dry academic preserve. The show on character finds Hughes visiting a prison to explore the possibility of people being rehabilitated. Elsewhere in the series, Oscar Wilde's grandson, Merlin Holland, offers his thoughts on narcissism.

Revolutionary roadway

Julian Mercer tells us why the opening of the Severn Bridge in 1966 was a great day for British engineering



Timeshift

TV BBC Four

scheduled for September

On the day she opened the Severn Bridge, in September 1966, Queen Elizabeth II also had another appointment, touched upon during live TV coverage of the official ceremony. "At one point, the BBC commentator says Her Majesty is going to Filton to see the new Concorde aircraft – it's a great day for British engineering," says Julian Mercer, producer of a new *Timeshift* documentary commemorating the 50th anniversary of the crossing linking England and Wales.

It's a piece of archive commentary that immediately calls to mind Harold Wilson's 'white heat of technology' speech. This is entirely apposite because the Severn Bridge was a remarkable technical achievement, which used an "aerodynamic roadway design" and was therefore slimmer and lighter than other suspension bridges of the time. This was particularly noteworthy because a comparable design had been tried in the US, where things had gone horribly wrong. "In 1940, they opened a bridge in Washington State called

Tacoma Narrows, and there's famous footage of this bridge collapsing," explains Mercer. "Basically, the wind coincided with the natural frequency of the structure and it caused it to vibrate and flutter and wobble – and it wobbled itself to death."

The Americans went back to building more substantial structures. In contrast, the Severn Bridge's elegant span has acted as a template for other projects since – this despite the fact that it was built across an estuary with one of the highest tidal ranges in the world and where high winds are a recurring problem. "It did change the face of bridge design and did it in the face of remarkable environmental challenges," says Mercer.

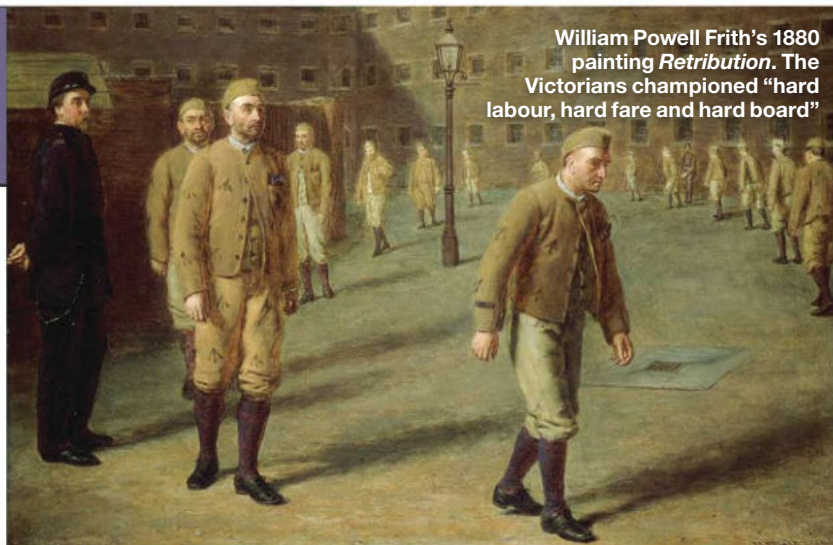
As to understanding why it was built, a famous 1966 photograph of Bob Dylan at the rickety-looking Aust Ferry terminal waiting to board a service that didn't run at high or low tide, says much.

The Severn Bridge documentary is one of a number of new *Timeshift* films in production. We can also look forward to explorations of the British docks; the story of how Asians kept the British cornershop alive; the culture around pigeon keeping; and philately. **H**

The Queen (centre) with minister for transport Barbara Castle at the opening of the Severn Bridge, 1966



"It did change the face of bridge design and did it in the face of remarkable environmental challenges"



William Powell Frith's 1880 painting *Retribution*. The Victorians championed "hard labour, hard fare and hard board"

Crime and punishment

Rethinking Clink
Radio Radio 4

scheduled for Monday 22 August

In autumn 2015, David Cameron promised "the biggest shake-up of prisons since Victorian times" in England and Wales. As a two-part documentary presented by former home secretary Jacqui Smith explores, the former prime minister was just the latest in a long line of politicians promising change in the penal system. So how are we to make sense of these initiatives?

Taking a historical perspective, Smith

begins with the Enlightenment ideas of John Howard (1726–90), who successfully campaigned against the brutality and the inconsistencies of the 18th-century legal system. She also considers Victorian attitudes towards prison – which put an onus on, to quote prison commissioner Sir Edmund du Cane, "hard labour, hard fare and hard board" – and early 20th-century attempts to rehabilitate offenders, which led to a halving of the prison population between 1908 and 1939.

The second programme picks up the story in 1945, examining why the prison population increased from the 1950s onwards. This was initially rooted, we learn, in politicians reacting to public concerns over rising crime rates.

Life on the rails

Full Steam Ahead

DVD (Acorn Media, £19.99)

The building of the railways changed Britain irrevocably. Places far from home became accessible. Materials that previously had to be sourced locally could be transported quickly across long distances. Even Britons' diets changed because it was now possible for delicate crops such as watercress to be transported into urban areas.

But what was it like to live through this transformation? Historian Ruth Goodman, plus archaeologists Peter Ginn and Alex Langlands of Victorian Farm fame,



explores the golden age of steam over six episodes.

The joy of the show lies not just in the trio's visits to heritage railways – although it's hard not to be moved by the sight of a puffing engine chugging through the British countryside – it's in the way the series finds small stories that tell a bigger tale.

In the first episode the presenters head for Snowdonia to learn how slate was moved by rail – millions of tonnes of slate. But it was a brutal business covering the nation's roofs. At

Llechweidd quarry, men worked exhausting 12-hour shifts suspended from iron chains. At least taking the slate back to civilisation, aboard a 'gravity train', was exhilarating.

The golden age of steam takes centre stage in *Full Steam Ahead*

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Dominic Sandbrook explores the decade of big hair and Band Aid

In 2006, British troops serving with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) were ordered to travel to the remote town of Musa Qala in Afghanistan's Helmand province. What happened next was a nightmare as Easy Company found themselves besieged by insurgents for more than 50 days. It's a story related in **Surrounded by the Taliban** (Channel 4, August), which features the testimony of those who were there.

In **The 80s with Dominic Sandbrook** (BBC Two, August), the historian considers the story of the decade when Margaret Thatcher was the pre-eminent British politician, hair got big, and a tired and dated science fiction show called *Doctor Who* was cancelled.

Over on Radio 4, film critic Antonia Quirke, presenter of *The Film Programme*, delivers an account of **Cinema's Secret History** (Thursday 25 August). On Radio 4 Extra, there's another chance to hear **The Essay: A Dark History of British Gardening** (Sunday 7 August), in which historian Jenny Uglow considers how green-fingered activity reveals less pleasant aspects of the British character, such as a tendency towards escapism displayed by, among others, Charles I.

The documentary premieres from PBS America include **Summer of Love** (Friday 19 August), which looks at what happened when wannabe hippies, who flocked to San Francisco at the end of the 1960s, found disappointment rather than a new way of living.

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MAGAZINE

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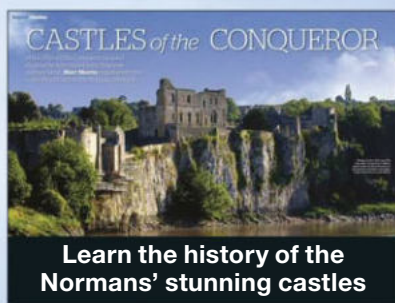
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OUT & ABOUT

HISTORY EXPLORER

The Napoleonic Wars

Huw Davies and Helen Carr visit **Apsley House** in central London, which has become a shrine to the Duke of Wellington's greatest triumphs

Only feet away from the chaotic Hyde Park Corner underground station, Apsley House is a wonderfully preserved time capsule of British patriotism and martial endeavours. It is most commonly associated with that great military hero and victor of the battle of Waterloo, Arthur Wellesley, the Duke of Wellington.

Filled with his portraits, regalia and ostentatious displays of silver and furniture, Apsley could almost serve as a shrine to the Iron Duke. The house in its current state appears fit for service, out of place in the 21st century. There are portraits of commanders and heroes of the Napoleonic Wars dominating the walls, while the dinner service, soft furnishings and musical instruments look only momentarily untouched, unaffected by the two centuries that have passed. In the silence of the house, apart from the few creaking floorboards, you can imagine a bustle of uniformed captains and generals walking into the great dining room with talk of war and politics.

Apsley was the first house on the north side of Piccadilly, initiating its nickname 'Number One, London'. The original house was designed and built between 1771 and 1778 for Lord Chancellor Henry, 1st Baron Apsley (later 2nd Earl Bathurst) by the fashionable architect Robert Adam. In 1807 the feckless and slightly roguish Richard, Marquess Wellesley,

paid £16,000 to buy the lease from the 3rd Earl Bathurst.

By 1817, Richard Wellesley was almost bankrupt. His brother Arthur had been ennobled as the Duke of Wellington thanks to his military triumphs in the Napoleonic Wars and, in commemoration of his success at the battle of Waterloo, parliament gave him £700,000 to build 'Waterloo Palace'. Instead of embarking on a new building project, the duke bought Apsley House from his brother, which he renovated in reflection of his new status. As Dr Huw Davies, senior lecturer in defence studies at King's College London explains, the duke chose a London site because "it was where he had more influence".

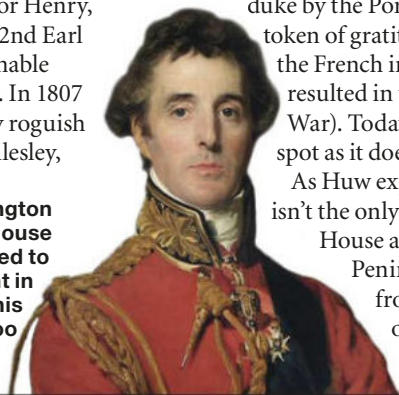
Greatest treasures

One of the duke's key adaptations to the house was the construction of the Waterloo Gallery, used to house the annual commemorative Waterloo Banquet, which took place every year from 1820–52. One of Apsley's greatest treasures is a painting, by William Salter, depicting the banquet (see page 82) with the Duke of Wellington as its central figure standing at a large dining table that is still in situ today.

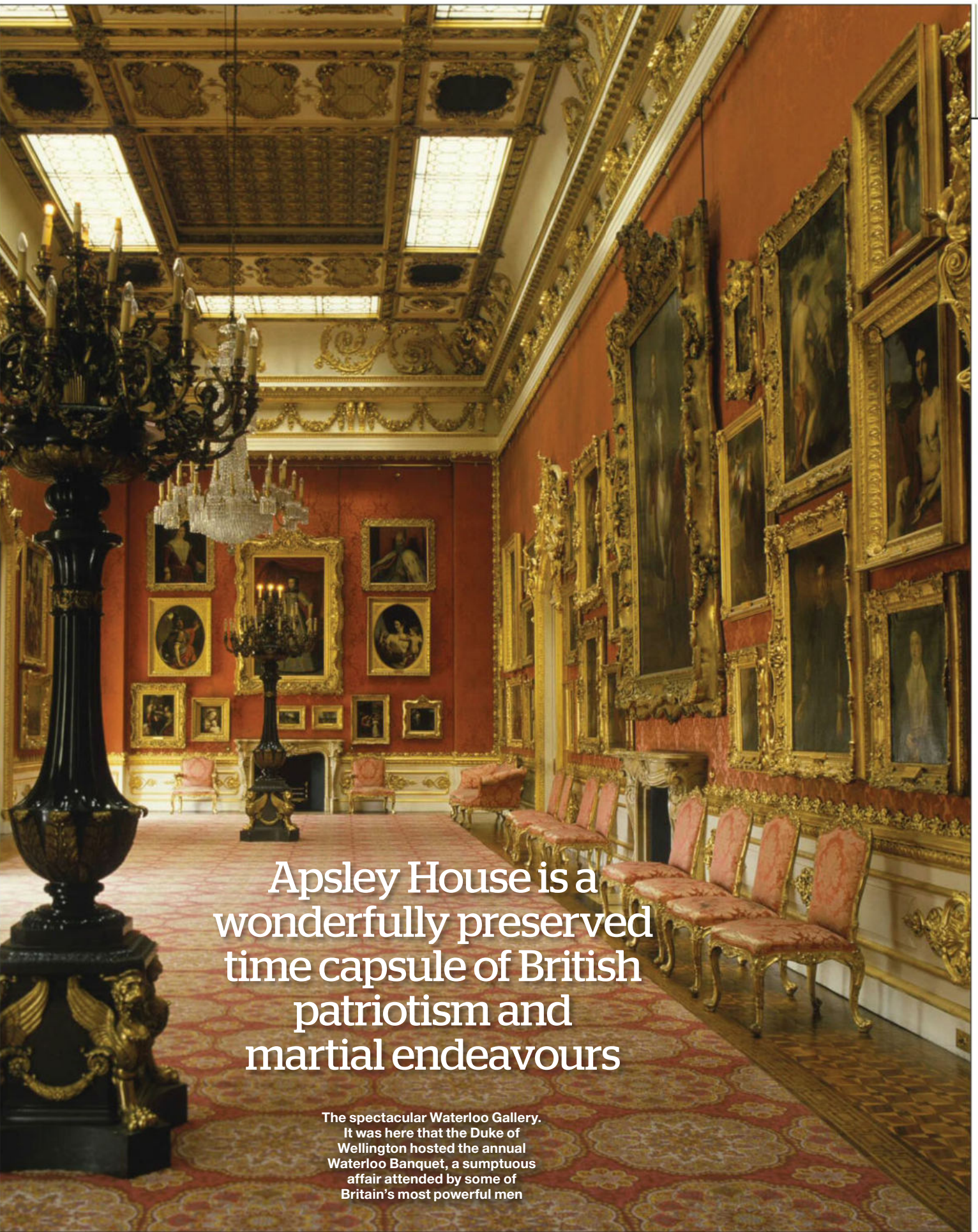
Within the portrait is also a remarkable silver centrepiece that was given to the duke by the Portuguese government as a token of gratitude for his part in repelling the French invasion of Portugal (which resulted in the so-called Peninsular War). Today, it sits in exactly the same spot as it does in Salter's painting.

As Huw explains, Salter's masterpiece isn't the only artwork to adorn Apsley House as a direct result of the Peninsular War. "In the fallout from their victory in the battle of Vitoria, the British force

The Duke of Wellington bought Apsley House with money granted to him by parliament in recognition of his victory at Waterloo



GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY



Apsley House is a wonderfully preserved time capsule of British patriotism and martial endeavours

The spectacular Waterloo Gallery. It was here that the Duke of Wellington hosted the annual Waterloo Banquet, a sumptuous affair attended by some of Britain's most powerful men

The Duke of Wellington addresses his guests in William Salter's *The Waterloo Banquet 1836*. The huge dining table is still in situ at Apsley House today



captured a French supply train containing a vast amount of art from the Spanish Royal Collection,” he says. “This too was gifted to the Duke of Wellington in recognition of his victory over the French.”

Britain's glory

Wellington's triumphs at Waterloo and in the Spanish peninsula are a constant theme in Apsley House. One of its quirkiest manifestations is a display containing the mane and shoe of Wellington's beloved horse Copenhagen, which he rode at Waterloo.

But it is when you reach the Red Stripe Room outside the original dining room that the importance of the battle to Wellington's life and legacy becomes most obvious. “The paintings here are trappings of the best of military history,” says Huw. “Their grandeur is designed to reflect Wellington's glory and, by extension, Britain's glory.”

Among the most striking is Sir William Allen's *Battle of Waterloo*, a brilliant topographical interpretation of the clash in its final throes that so impressed Wellington that he bought it. (This makes it the only depiction of the battle that the duke actually paid for). Napoleon is there in the foreground, sending his Imperial Guard on its final attack, while the Duke of Wellington can be made out marshalling the allied troops – courtesy of his trademark hat, grey coat and large nose. “Thanks to the expanse of the battlefield, and the sheer number of individu-

als fighting on it, this an astonishing representation of Waterloo,” says Huw.

The only portrait in the Red Stripe Room that strays from the theme of war is of Pauline Borghese, the sister of Napoleon Bonaparte. Pauline is depicted as a risqué woman, notorious for her frequent liaisons with various men. The Duke of Wellington bought the portrait in Paris and hung it in its current location, possibly to mock Pauline. Equally, there are paintings of Napoleon Bonaparte hung within the extensive art collection in the house, possibly in jest, perhaps to serve as a haunting reminder of Bonaparte's reign, but most likely in commemoration of all aspects of the battle of Waterloo – the friends and the foes.

Disastrous invasion

Fought on Sunday 18 June 1815 in present-day Belgium, Waterloo was the climactic battle of the Napoleonic Wars, a vicious 12-year conflict that pitted the forces of Napoleon's France against a coalition of European powers. Thanks to Napo-

leon's tactical brilliance, his armies dominated the early years of the war, conquering huge swathes of Europe. But then, following a disastrous French invasion of Russia, the might of the nations ranged against Napoleon began to bring their power to bear. By

1814, Portuguese, Spanish, Russians, Prussian and Austrian boots were on French soil, and the future was looking bleak for the French



Sir John Colborne is one of the many soldiers who fought at Waterloo to grace the walls of Apsley House

“THE PAINTINGS’ GRANDEUR IS DESIGNED TO REFLECT WELLINGTON’S GLORY AND, BY EXTENSION, BRITAIN’S GLORY”

emperor. “Despite fighting a series of rearguard actions, Napoleon could not overcome the invasion and was forced to surrender,” says Huw. “He was then exiled to the island of Elba off the coast of Italy.”

But that was not the last the world would hear from him. In early 1815, Napoleon escaped Elba and returned to Paris to depose Louis XVIII. He then proceeded to attack the Low Countries, which were held by a combination of the Duke of Wellington's small British force and Dutch, Saxon and Prussian troops. His aim was to defeat the coalition and capture Brussels.

The speed of Napoleon's march into Belgium shocked the Duke of Wellington, leading him to declare: “By God he's humbugged me, he's got 24 hours' march on me!” However, the duke regained his composure in time to take up a defensive position on the small battlefield at Waterloo, inviting Napoleon to launch repeated attacks against him.

“The slaughter at Waterloo was appalling,” says Huw. “The Duke of Wellington himself only narrowly escaped death, and one of his most trusted generals, Thomas Picton, was killed on the battlefield while leading the infantry.”

The duke supposedly claimed that “Napoleon was worth 10,000 troops by himself”. But, by maintaining the defence throughout the day – despite nearly crumbling on several occasions under the



GETTY IMAGES/BRIDGEMAN/ALAMY

VISIT

Apsley House



149 Piccadilly, Hyde Park Corner, London

● english-heritage.org.uk

weight of French attacks – the coalition forces prevailed. In doing so, they dealt Napoleon a decisive and irreversible blow and helped bring relative peace to a war-ravaged Europe for the next 50 years. As for the Duke of Wellington himself, he secured himself a spot in the pantheon of great British military figures.

“He is perhaps Britain’s greatest general,” says Huw. “And in the wake of Waterloo, he was a national hero.”

Bricks and bars

But could the great military leader become a great political leader? He certainly thought so and soon set about trying to prove it. In 1828, having become an increasingly popular and influential figure in the Tory party, the duke resigned from the position of commander-in-chief and took up the post of British prime minister (choosing to remain at Apsley House because he found 10 Downing Street too small).

But he was unable to replicate his achievements on the battlefield in Britain’s corridors of power. “He was a reactionary politician,” says Huw. “He opposed any innovation within government and the army, and that proved to be his downfall.”

The duke’s arch-conservatism was even to have ramifications for Apsley House itself. When the duke opposed proposals to reform Britain’s electoral system in 1831, protestors attacked the house, “throwing several bricks

through the windows, and damaging a number of paintings”. In response to the attack, the house’s implacable owner placed iron bars on all of the windows in Apsley House and, in doing so, gave birth to his popular nickname ‘the Iron Duke’.

Despite his unpopularity as a politician, the Duke of Wellington seems to have lost none of his bullishness, responding to a protest on 18 June – the anniversary of Waterloo – by doffing his cap and exclaiming: “A good day for it.”

By 1830, his government had fallen into decline, losing a vote of confidence. By 1842, his career had turned full circle and he was once again commander-in-chief of the British Army.

The duke would never replicate his earlier triumphs on the battlefield. But nor would he need to. His legacy as a great military leader was secure. “He has taken on an almost legendary status,” says Huw. “Two centuries after that famous victory at Waterloo, he is just as popular as he was at the start of the 19th century – you can see this just by reading the Sharpe novels.”

And you can see it by visiting Apsley House, which has become a focal point for the remembrance of a great military leader and his finest hour. “This building reflects the importance of Waterloo to the creation of the image of Britain as a world-leading military power,” says Huw. “It really illustrates how important Waterloo is to British history.” **H**



Huw Davies is a senior lecturer in defence studies at King’s College London. His books include *Wellington’s Wars: The Making of a Military Genius* (Yale, 2012). Words: Helen Carr

NAPOLEONIC WARS: FIVE MORE PLACES TO EXPLORE

1 Stratfield Saye House

HAMPSHIRE

Where a funeral carriage resides

Stratfield Saye has been a home of the Dukes of Wellington since 1817. Within the stables is the Wellington Exhibition which includes a vast collection of military memorabilia from the 1st Duke’s career, including his cast bronze funeral carriage made from melted-down French cannons seized at the battle of Waterloo.

stratfield-saye.co.uk

2 Walmer Castle

KENT

Where the Duke of Wellington died

Walmer Castle was the official residence of the Lords Warden of the Cinque Ports, a post held by the Duke of Wellington when he was made Lord Warden in 1829. (He would die here in 1852.) The castle’s Wellington Museum includes a pair of the famous ‘Wellington’ boots.

english-heritage.org.uk

3 Waterloo battlefield

SOUTH OF BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Where the duke won eternal glory

Arguably the most impressive feature at the site of Wellington’s greatest triumph is the Lion’s Mound monument, which offers a wonderful vista of the battlefield. A cluster of monuments at the nearby crossroads mark the graves of British, Dutch and Hanoverian troops.

waterloo200.org

4 Salamanca battlefield

WESTERN SPAIN

Where the French were bested

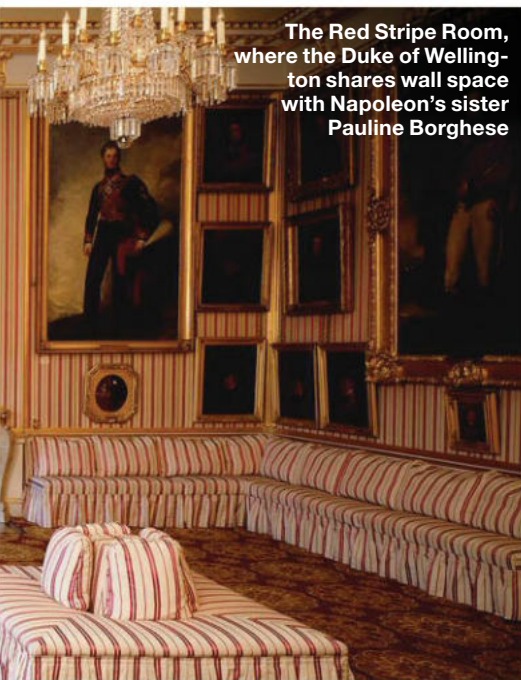
The battle of Salamanca saw Wellington surprise and overwhelm a French force around the hills of Arapiles in Spain in 1812. It is widely regarded as his tactical masterpiece, and you can view the scene of the action from the British memorial on the battlefield or visit the museum in the village of Arapiles. peninsularwar200.org

5 The Wellington Arch, LONDON

Where George IV hailed a hero

Also known as the Constitution Arch and the Green Park Arch, this triumphal monument in Hyde Park was commissioned by King George IV to commemorate Waterloo. It originally supported a statue of the Duke of Wellington on horseback. In 1912 this was replaced with a sculpture of a horse-drawn chariot. english-heritage.org.uk

The Red Stripe Room, where the Duke of Wellington shares wall space with Napoleon’s sister Pauline Borghese



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Image: Andy Garthwaite, Ben Riehton & family and Les Fryatt, Soldiers' Charity beneficiaries

FIVE THINGS TO DO IN SEPTEMBER

The Boy King returns

EVENT

Gloucester History Festival

Various venues, Gloucester

3–18 September

☎ 01452 396572

● gloucesterhistoryfestival.co.uk



This year's festival turns the spotlight on the anniversary of the coronation of Henry III in Gloucester. On 10 September, 'The Boy King' parade and re-enactment of the coronation takes place at Gloucester Cathedral, to celebrate 800 years since the nine-year old prince was crowned.

The event opens on 3 September, which is 'Gloucester day' – an occasion that commemorates the day when the Civil War siege was lifted. There will be historical re-enactments aplenty, plus other activities at various local venues including the Soldiers of Gloucester Museum, the Folk Museum, Waterways Museum and City Museum.

The festival also features music recitals, exhibitions, guided walks, a medieval market and family craft activities. A highlight is the series of Blackfriars Talks (10–18 September) with a programme of leading historians, broadcasters, researchers and authors speaking on various topics, providing insights and sharing updates on new research. Among those appearing are Griff Rhys Jones, Bettany Hughes, Alison Weir, Janina Ramirez (who is the president of Gloucester History Festival) and Jung Chang.

The festival also incorporates Heritage Open Days, which enables access to many historic buildings free of charge – from private rooms at the Dick Whittington pub (where there is an Elizabethan wall frieze), to the scriptorium at Blackfriars. Free events may require a ticket due to limited access.



The community events at Gloucester History Festival include medieval re-enactments

EVENT

England's Medieval Festival

Herstmonceux Castle,

East Sussex

27–29 August

☎ 020 8150 6767

● englandsmedievalfestival.com

Jousting, battles and other re-enactments, medieval craftsmen, music and dancing, birds of prey, a trebuchet and various family activities all feature at this event. Also on the menu is a medieval banquet, hog roasts and have-a-go archery. In the evenings there are special activities for weekend ticket holders.



EXHIBITION

You Say You Want a Revolution?

Victoria and Albert

Museum, London

10 September–26 Feb 2017

☎ 020 7942 2000

● vam.ac.uk/revolution

Subtitled 'Records and Rebels 1966–70', this exhibition explores the significance and impact of the era, expressed through some of the music and performances of the time, alongside fashion, film, design and political activism.

The Souper Dress
from 1966/67

EVENT / FREE ENTRY

Heritage Open Days

Various venues in England

8–11 September

● heritageopendays.org.uk

England's annual celebration of history, architecture and culture involves around 5,000 venues across the country. Visitors can explore local buildings of every age, style and function, from railway signal boxes to Victorian schools and from lighthouses to Second World War tunnels – all of them free.

Scotland has its own version of the scheme this month (doorsopendays.org.uk) as does Wales (cadw.gov.wales/opendoors).

EXHIBITION / FREE ENTRY

In Safe Hands: The Story of the Liverpool Pilots

Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool

Until 4 June 2017

☎ 0151 478 4499

● liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

The exhibition tells the story of Liverpool pilots and their vital role in getting ships in and out of port, in what are some of the most difficult to navigate waters in the world. It explores 250 years of maritime history, from the growth of the 18th century, via decline in the mid-20th, to the thriving port of the 21st century.

MY FAVOURITE PLACE

Delft, Netherlands



by **Stephen Porter**

For the latest in our historical holidays series, Stephen visits a Dutch town made famous by the artist Vermeer

Samuel Pepys visited Delft in May 1660, a member of the delegation sent to convey Charles II to England to claim his throne, and described it as “a most sweet town, with bridges and a river in every street”.

That description still holds true. The wide streets, the broad Markt (market place) with its grand town hall, and the light reflecting from the water, give the town a sense of space and a fascinating variety of vistas.

Delft is characteristic of the Dutch canal towns, its historic core criss-crossed by a network of waterways, enclosed within a wide perimeter canal. The main streets have a central canal flanked by roadways lined by trees, and their buildings have a lively mix of frontages.

Two main canals, the Oude Delft and the Nieuwe Delft, run the length of the historic town. On the west side of the Oude Delft is the Prinsenhof, a former convent converted into a nobleman's house after the Reformation. Now a museum, it is where William the Silent, the leader of the Dutch revolt against Spanish rule, was assassinated on 10 July 1584. He lived a relaxed lifestyle when he

was in Delft, walking the streets with his dog and chatting to the citizens, yet in 1580 the Spanish had put a price on his head.

Balthasar Gérard, a cabinet-maker's apprentice, waited one day in the hallway outside the dining-room for William to emerge from lunch. When he did so Gérard shot him at close range. The prince collapsed and died soon afterwards. The pistol balls passed through the prince and the holes they made in the wall are still there. The scene can easily be imagined; a re-enactment in silhouette is projected onto a nearby wall.

Thirty years later the Estates General commissioned Hendrick de Keyser to erect a tomb for the prince. This grandiose monument is in the Nieuwe Kerk (new church) on Markt. It is worth visiting Delft just to see it, and the view across Holland's flat landscape from the church tower



Vrouwenregt is typical of the atmospheric streets of Delft, a historic town criss-crossed by canals

is well worth the climb. The tower of the town's other great medieval church, the Oude Kerk (old church), a few minutes' walk away on the street Heilige Geestkerkhof, stands at an alarming angle, a reminder of the nature of the subsoil in this sandy region.

The creation of a new country, the United Provinces, in the aftermath of William's assassination and its remarkable economic development over the following decades is an intriguing story for an early modern historian.

Having written a book about

The Little Street characterises Delft – you can visit the spot where Vermeer painted it

the Great Fire of London in 1666, I was also drawn to Delft through my interest in urban fires and, by extension, gunpowder explosions; the town experienced both. The fire in 1536 destroyed a large section of the town, shown on a painted map, anticipating Wenceslaus Hollar's plan showing the extent of the destruction in the Great Fire of London. The detonation of the magazine of the Province of Holland in 1654 also attracted wide attention and became expressively known as the Delft Thunderclap. The site was later used as a horse-fair and is now a car park. The catastrophe is not recorded there, but the aftermath was depicted by several artists.



“Samuel Pepys described Delft as “a most sweet town, with bridges and a river in every street”. That description still holds true

Artist Carel Fabritius was killed as a result of the explosion, and hundreds of people injured. His contemporary Jan Vermeer escaped the blast and went on to paint the interiors of his home town, and two depictions of its exterior. One, the *View of Delft*, is an evocative perspective of the town seen across its perimeter canal (we stayed in a house close to his viewpoint on our most recent visit). The painting is in the Mauritshuis in The Hague

(easily reached by tram or train in half an hour). The second, *The Little Street*, shows the exterior of a canalside house; new research has identified the location that it depicts. The painting itself is in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (about an hour away by train).

Vermeer's other paintings are scattered around leading galleries in Europe and the US, but reproductions are displayed in the Vermeer Centrum at 21 Voldersgracht in Delft. The 17th-century town can also be seen in domestic tableaux by Pieter de Hooch, who worked there in the 1650s and depicted cool, spotlessly clean houses and sunlit yards, while its light and

airy church interiors were recorded in a score of paintings in the 1650s and 1660s.

Rarely do we have such glimpses into the lives of people in the past as we do through the paintings of 17th-century Dutch artists. It is fascinating to follow in their footsteps and explore the streets and buildings of Delft. **H**

Stephen Porter is an urban historian whose latest book is *The Story of London* (Amberley, 2016)

Read more of Stephen's experiences in Delft at historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine/delft

Next month: Andrew Dickson visits California

ADVICE FOR TRAVELLERS

BEST TIME TO GO

Go in the spring or early summer, for the clarity of the light. Holland's colourful bulb fields are in bloom then, although the industry has recently invested in large covered structures.

GETTING THERE

From the train station at Amsterdam airport (Schiphol) there are frequent trains to Delft's brand-new station (40 minutes). From The Hague there is a regular tram service to Delft.

WHAT TO PACK

A comfortable pair of shoes is a must, because this is a town best enjoyed on foot and there are many cobblestones. Delft's good shops should supply anything you may have forgotten.

WHAT TO BRING BACK

The Delftware company's factory, not far from the centre, sells a range of its famous blue-and-white pottery. Bulbs and distinctive cheeses can be discovered at the regular markets.

READERS' VIEWS

Climb the tower of the Nieuwe Kerk. I found Delft as lovely as Bruges but without the tourists.
@essexoldbird

Avoid the tourist magnets and just enjoy a walk around its lovely city centre canals
Arjen A Wilbers



Been there...

Have you been to Delft? Do you have a top tip for readers? Contact us via Twitter or Facebook

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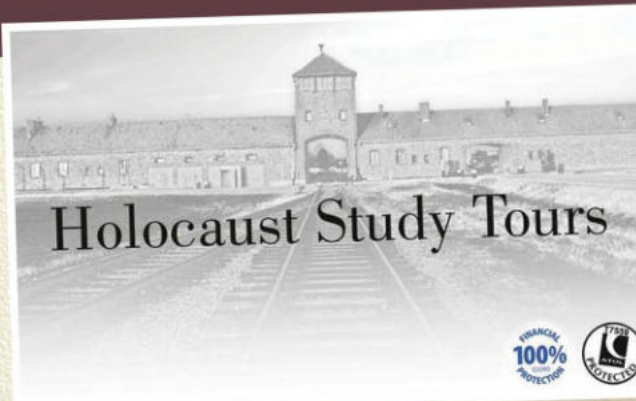
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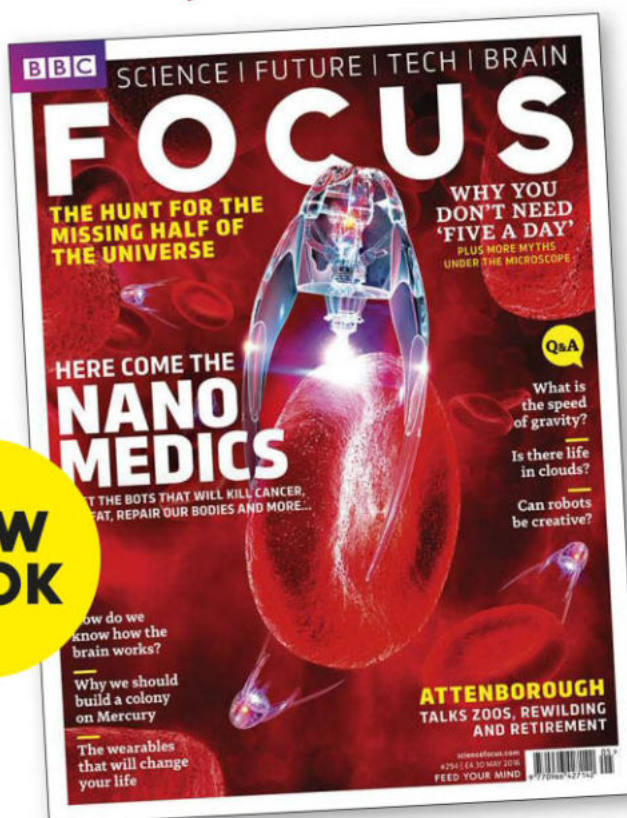
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MISCELLANY

Q&A



QUIZ

BY JULIAN HUMPHRYS

Try your hand at this month's history quiz

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1. In June 1967, TV actor Reg Varney became the first person in the world to use one. What was it?

2. Why were hammers and chisels offered for hire in the Wiltshire town of Amesbury in the 19th century?

3. What links Good, Bad, Merciless, Addled, Short and Long?

4. According to the RAF Museum, No 303 Squadron was the RAF's most successful Battle of Britain fighter unit. What was the nationality of nearly all of its pilots?

5. How is Jane, Duchess of Gordon, said to have helped with late 18th-century army recruiting?

6. What is significant about this building, which is in Brougham Terrace, Liverpool?



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. A cash machine **2.** So that people could go to nearby Stonehenge and chip off a souvenir **3.** They were all English parliaments **4.** Polish **5.** By offering a kiss to anyone who joined her husband's regiment **6.** 8-10 Brougham Terrace housed England's first mosque, opened in 1889

GOT A QUESTION?

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or submit via our website: historyextra.com/bbchistorymagazine



ILLUSTRATION BY GLEN MCBETH

Q Charles I's nephew Prince Rupert had a dog thought to have demonic powers, which he used in Civil War battles. What breed was it?

Pat Sims, by email

A Stories that Rupert possessed a 'necromantic dog' began to circulate in winter 1642–43, soon after Charles I appointed his nephew as general of the royalist cavalry at the start of the Civil War. Accounts of the dog's name, its colour and even its sex are bewilderingly diverse, though.

According to one source, Rupert had been given "a rare bitch called Puddle" several years before the war began, "which dogs were so renowned" that the Ottoman Sultan himself had been anxious to procure a similar specimen. This report clearly indicates that Rupert's dog was a poodle – and the fact that several later writers stated that the beast was named Puddle tends to point the same way. (The fact that the dog was more commonly known as 'Boy' suggests that this was its given name, while 'Puddle' referred to its breed).

Little can be gleaned from the image

purporting to depict Rupert's dog published in 1643, for this was, in fact, a reproduction of an old illustration of a water spaniel. It is possible a painting of a large, white poodle on a cushion provides a more accurate representation of 'Boy' – but the claim that this depicts the prince's famous dog cannot be traced back all that far.

Perhaps the most helpful contemporary testimony is that of Lady Sussex, who, in 1643, informed a correspondent that, during a recent day's hunting, the prince had shot "five bucks ... and his dog, Boy, pulled them down". Rupert's dog was clearly quite large then and this, together with the information noted above, makes it seem reasonable to suggest Boy was a standard poodle – but we will probably never know for sure!

Mark Stoyle is professor of early modern history at the University of Southampton

SAMANTHA'S RECIPE CORNER



Every issue, picture editor **Samantha Nott** brings you a recipe from the past. This month it's a filling legume dish that's been a favourite since the Middle Ages

Pease pudding

Nowadays most commonly cooked in the north-east of England, pease pudding is a dish that evolved from medieval pease pottage, one of the main filler dishes before potatoes arrived in the British Isles.

It merits a mention as 'Perry of Pesoun' in *The Forme of Cury*, a 14th-century recipe book whose authors are described as "the chief master cooks of King Richard II".

Three hundred years later, it appears in the written record again – this time courtesy of Samuel Pepys. "At noon I went home and dined with my wife on pease porridge and nothing else," the famous diarist tells us.

Best served with bread, salty meats, ham hock, sausages, even fish and chips, it's a versatile dish that can be used as a spread similar to hummus.

INGREDIENTS

500g green dried split peas, soaked overnight
50g butter

1 tbsp each of chopped parsley, mint and marjoram
Salt and pepper to taste
Bread and meats to serve

METHOD

Drain and rinse the soaked peas. Then tip into a saucepan with fresh water, cover and bring to the boil, skimming off any scum that rises to the surface. Simmer for at least one hour, until the peas are tender.

Strain the peas and add the chopped herbs and butter. You may need to add more butter or water to make a creamy texture and mash together for a rustic feel. Or you can use a blender for a smooth puree.

VERDICT

"The peas and salty meats are a perfect marriage"

Difficulty: 2/10

Time: Cooking time 1 hour (after soaking peas for 8-12 hours)

Adapted from a recipe in Pride and Pudding by Regula Ysewijn (Murdoch Books)



Samuel Pepys was a fan of pease pudding

Female domestic workers were in demand in America, seen in an idealised image from an 18th-century cookbook



Q Is it true that in the 18th century some British people actually sold themselves as voluntary 'slaves' in the American plantations?

Janet Tregurtha, via email

A No, though many felt that they had unwittingly done so. The indentured labour system, used in Britain in the 17th and 18th centuries, was employed to provide labour in the American colonies and the Caribbean. A broadly similar system was later employed in Australia, and with workers from British India in East Africa. There are plenty of other variations elsewhere too.

At the basis of the system was a contract whereby you agreed to work for a set period of time (typically between four and seven years) in return for free passage to America, board and lodging and, at the end of the period, 'freedom dues' – a grant of money, land, clothing, tools or a combination of these.

Under this system, the American colonies could quickly acquire able-bodied workers and the poor got free passage to a new and (hopefully) better life. By many estimates, half or more of all the white immigrants to Britain's American colonies from the 1630s to the 1770s arrived under this system. It

involved women as well as men, as they were in demand as domestic workers.

For many people, indentured service was indeed the passage to a better and more prosperous life in the new world. But the system could be, and was, abused. Petty infractions of the contract could result in the term of labour being extended, likewise the length of a woman's service if she got pregnant. Many indentured servants often found that the conditions under which they were working were far from those they had been promised, with plenty of work but little food. Many absconded, and a few even committed suicide. In the very worst cases it would have appeared no different from slavery.

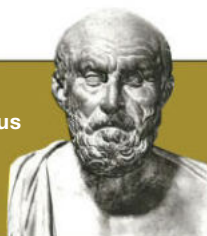
Controversially, some historians claim that black slaves were often treated better than many indentured servants, because slaves were valuable property in need of maintenance, whereas a white worker was best exploited until his or her time had expired.

Eugene Byrne, author and journalist

BRIDGEMAN

PRIZE CROSSWORD

Which famous Greek physician had high ethical standards? (see 26)



CROSSWORD PRIZE

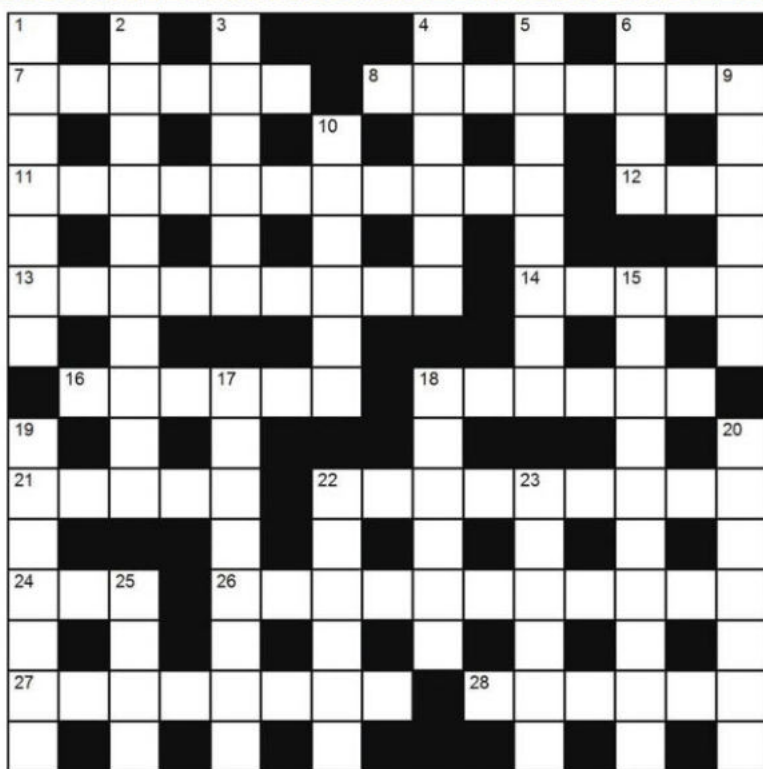


Across

- 7** US president whose failure to secure a second term is put down to his failure to deal with the Depression (6)
8 Member of a tribal society inhabiting a region corresponding to parts of modern Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria (8)
11 Narrow pass in central Greece, scene of Persian defeat of the Greeks in 480 BC (11)
12 Security agency downgraded in 1991, following an unsuccessful coup against the president (3)
13 (Later name of) the city founded in 1703 which surpassed Archangel as a port (9)
14 In 1974 it became the world's sixth country to carry out a nuclear explosion test (5)
16 Region centred on present-day Nova Scotia, first colonised by France in the early 17th century (6)
18 A south-east Asian capital, whose name was changed after it was taken by communist forces on 30 April 1975 (6)
21 A famous carving in the temple at Abydos depicts Seti, with his son Ramesses II, using one (5)
22 German industrialist and member of the Nazi party, whose factory protected a large Jewish workforce from 1939–44 (9)
24 Old name for Tokyo, the capital of the Tokugawa shogunate (3)
26 Greek physician born in the fifth century BC, renowned for his writing on ethical standards in medicine (though it might not be his work) (11)
27 Famously employed by Nelson to ignore orders during the battle of Copenhagen, 1801 (5,3)
28 Danish king who was nicknamed 'Bluetooth' (6)

Down

- 1** English aviation engineer, credited with inventing the jet engine (7)
2 Polish astronomer whose 16th-century theory put the sun at the centre of the 'universe' (10)
3 In medieval times, a commoner



- who held land, or an attendant, etc to a noble household (6)
4 King of Saudi Arabia whose seven-year reign began after his predecessor's assassination (6)
5 The title claimed by the 'Old Pretender' (5,3)
6 It gave its name to the ancient trade route connecting China to the Mediterranean (4)
9 A member of an ancient civilisation based in what is now northern Sudan / southern Egypt (6)
10 Greek city-state that was distinguished by its highly disciplined, militaristic constitution (6)
15 Last great persecution of Christians occurred in the reign of this Roman emperor (early fourth century) (10)
17 Irish town, scene of infamous massacre by Oliver Cromwell's troops in 1649 (8)
18 One such establishment, founded in Canterbury in AD 597, is said to be the oldest in England (6)
19 British field marshal who directed the Palestine Campaign in the First World War (7)
20 For example, one of the military expeditions undertaken by Christians from the late 11th century (7)

- 22** The Indian rebellion of 1857 was initiated by these troops (6)
23 Member of those Vikings settling in northern France c 9th/10th centuries (6)
25 Roman poet, who died in Tomis, banished there by emperor Augustus (4)

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SOLUTION TO OUR JULY CROSSWORD

Across: 7 Heraclea 8 Eadred 11 Bloody Mary 12 Ulundi 13 Karl Marx 15 Athens 16 Quesnay 18 Rameses 21 Rwanda 23/2 Sir Francis Walsingham 25/10 Dark Ages 26 Trent 27 Linnaeus
Down: 1 Bengal 3 Plebeian 4 Farouk 5 Tedder 6 Adam 9 Etruria 14 Mustard gas 15 Airlift 17 Uprising 19 Sparta 20 Sickle 22 Darius 24 Fieser

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Acting deputy editor Sue Wingrove suewingrove@historyextra.com

Reviews editor Matt Elton mattelton@historyextra.com

Production editor Spencer Mizen

Picture editor Samantha Nott samnott@historyextra.com

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Deputy art editors Rachel Dickens, Rosemary Smith, Sarah Lambert

Picture researcher Katherine Hallett

Digital editor Emma Mason emmamason@historyextra.com

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Vol 17 No 9 – September 2016

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Brand sales executives

Sam Evanson 0117 314 8754

Sam.Evanson@immediate.co.uk

Scarlett Rossiter 0117 300 8532

Scarlett.Rossiter@immediate.co.uk

Classified sales executive

Chris O'Neill 0117 300 8542

Chris.ONeill@immediate.co.uk

Group direct marketing manager

Laurence Robertson 00353 5787 57444

Subscriptions director Jacky Perales-Morris

Direct marketing executive Natalie Medler

US representative Kate Buckley

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PRESS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Press officer Dominic Lobley

020 7150 5015

dominic.lobley@immediate.co.uk

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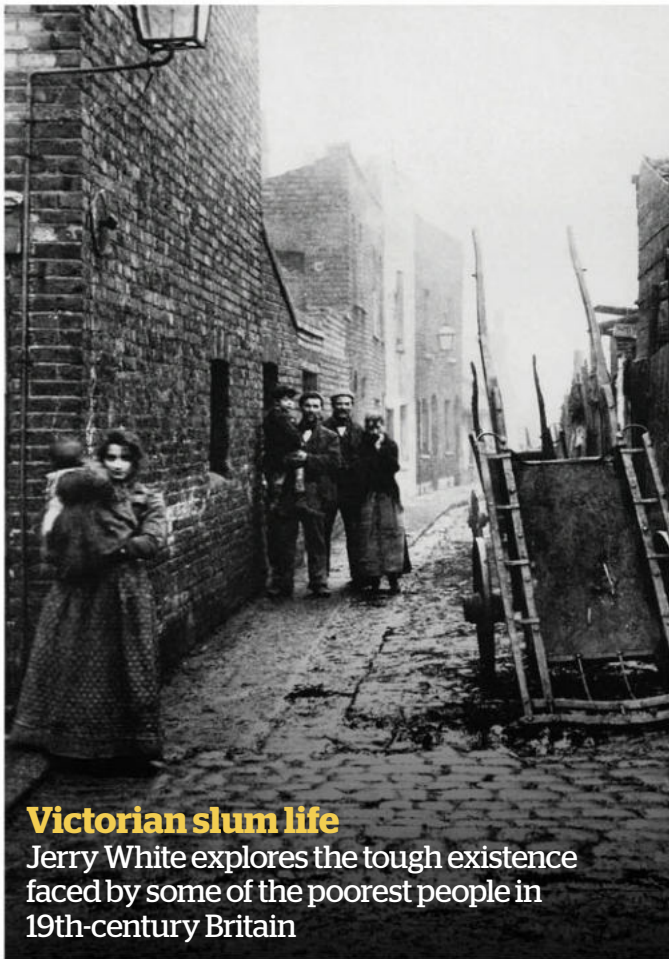


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The battle for > the rock

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"She lived at a time when black women weren't meant to have a voice. But Maya Angelou did have a voice and she used it in so many ways"

Broadcaster Naga Munchetty chooses

Maya Angelou

1928-2014

The term 'multi-talented' barely seems to do Maya Angelou justice. She was an actress, screenwriter, dancer, musician, poet, author and leading civil rights activist, who campaigned alongside Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. She endured a traumatic childhood, and was raped as an eight-year-old. She related this incident in her 1969 memoir *I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings*, which became the first nonfiction bestseller by an African-American woman. Her position as one of America's foremost cultural figures was confirmed when she recited her poem *On the Pulse of Morning* at President Bill Clinton's inauguration in 1993.

When did you first hear about Maya Angelou?

When I read *I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings* while studying GCSE English at school. This was one of the first examples of a black woman writing that I'd come across – and, to my teenage mind, it was a revelation. I suddenly realised that not all literature was penned by Victorian or Edwardian novelists!

What was Angelou's finest hour?

It's impossible to point to one particular incident, as she did so many amazing things in her life. However, *I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings* will always be special to me. It's searingly honest. And it must have been so painful for her to confront her rape by her mother's boyfriend. In retaliation, Angelou's uncles murdered the boyfriend. Angelou was so traumatised by the whole episode that she became a virtual mute for years. It was an awful period in her life, and to confront that in this amazing book was an extraordinary achievement.

What kind of person was she?

Brave. Really brave. She lived at a time when black women weren't meant to have a voice or thought capable of changing the world. But she never considered herself as the type of person who could be downtrodden and ignored. And she expressed this in so many ways. For example, she became the first black American female cable car conductor, she co-wrote a song with the singer Roberta Flack, she sang and performed in a film called *Calypso Heat Wave*. She upped sticks and moved to Ghana with a lover – that was not a



Maya Angelou – pictured at the Cheltenham literary festival in 2005 – was "the ultimate boundary-breaker", says Naga Munchetty

conventional thing for a woman to do in the 1960s. She was the ultimate boundary-breaker.

She overcame so many setbacks in her life, from racism and sexual abuse to the sudden deaths of her friends Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. King was shot the day she turned 40 – as a result, she stopped celebrating her birthday for years.

Why do you consider her a hero?

For her incredible bravery, and because she's inspired women across generations. Her life resonates with people 20 years older than me, and 20 years younger. You can see that in young artists like [British soul singer] Laura Mvula, whose song 'Phenomenal Woman' was inspired by Angelou's poem of the same name.

What do you think Angelou would make of the political environment in the United States today?

One of her most famous quotes is: "Hate, it has caused a lot of problems in the world but hasn't solved one yet." Never have these words been more pertinent than at the moment. I think she would be quite sad that we still insist on turning individual groups of people into scapegoats.

If you had the chance to interview Angelou today, what would you ask her?

I'd ask her: when did you first realise that you could be anything you wanted to be? And to what extent do you believe that women are still restricted by society's limitations?

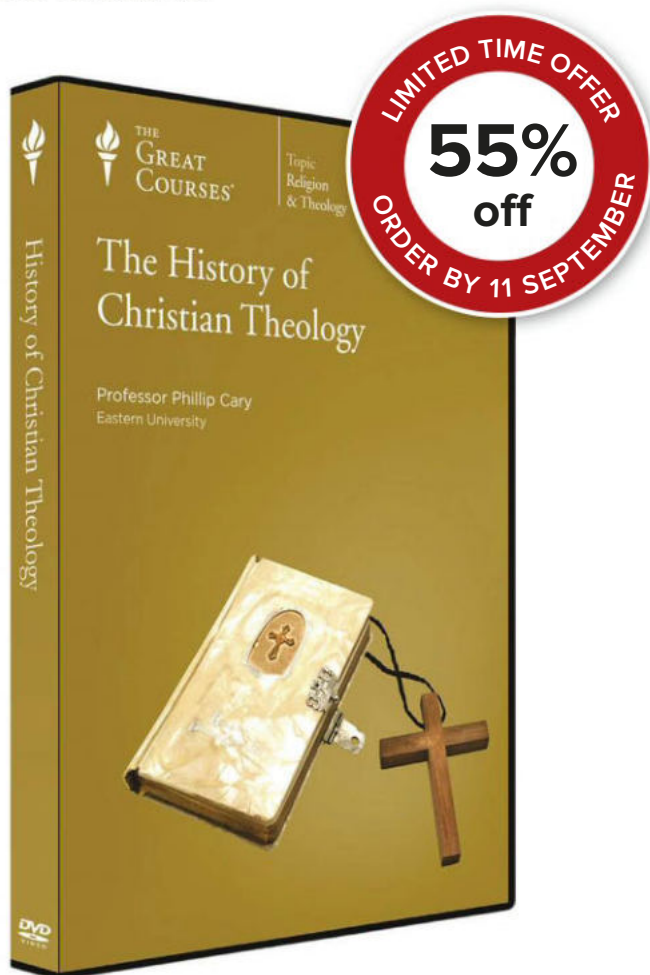
Are you interested in history?

I studied ancient history and modern history at A-level, and feel far more at home with these periods than, say, the Tudors. Having said that, I enjoy reading about anyone who lived an interesting life, and there's no denying that Maya Angelou did that.

Naga Munchetty was talking to Spencer Mizen

Naga Munchetty presents the topical debate programme *Sunday Morning Live* on Sundays at 10am on BBC One, and is also a presenter for *BBC Breakfast*





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